

RESTORIN'

E. WARREN

UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY  
MASTER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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**Report on Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Master of  
Community Development,  
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**All images appearing in this report are the work product of the Restorin' E. Warren team  
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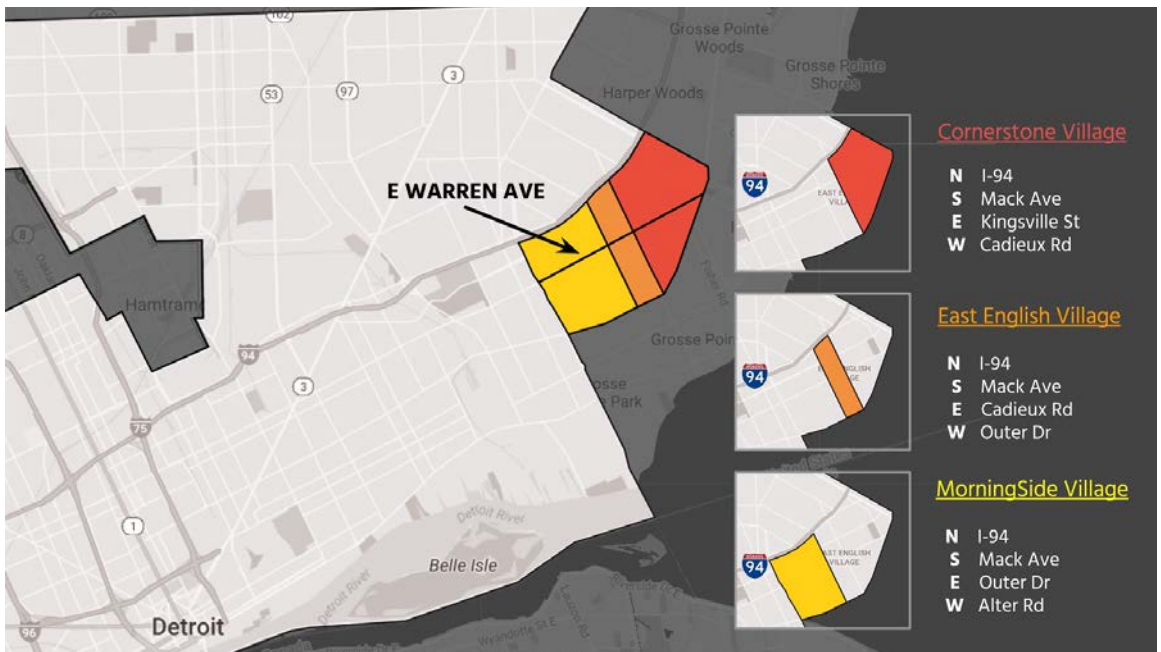
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The neighborhoods of MorningSide, East English Village, and Cornerstone Village reside on the far east border of Detroit. East Warren Avenue, a once thriving commercial corridor, cuts through the heart of these three communities. The focus for this capstone project is a 0.8-mile length along E. Warren between MorningSide's Bedford Road and Guilford Street, in Cornerstone Village. This stretch is particularly important because it is home to the historic Alger Theater, which opened in 1935 and, quickly established itself as an important community anchor.

Between 1930 and 1954, the number of businesses rose from 21 to 161 just along the 0.8-mile study area. Residents rarely needed to leave their neighborhood to tend to their daily needs. Unfortunately, today the story is drastically different. Like many of the commercial strips located in Detroit neighborhoods, E. Warren has been in a steady state of



decline for several decades. The reasons are complex and interwoven; deindustrialization and the resulting changing demographics were significant contributing factors. The deterioration of the area accelerated during the 1950s and 1960s, as stores began to leave the area due to the opening of sprawling suburban malls. Finally, beginning in the early 1980s, the state of the economy forced the closing of still more area businesses, and today over 63% of the commercial properties along the strip are vacant.

Despite this reality, there is early evidence that things are beginning to turn back in the right direction. The historic Alger Theater sits at the corner of E. Warren and Outer Drive. There is a strong consensus among community stakeholders that the Alger Theater is key to the redevelopment that needs to occur along the strip. In fact, one local business owner referred to the Alger as the “heartbeat of Warren.” After many years of inactivity at the site, there is active development now occurring. Initiatives include an open-air rooftop terrace, retail space for Reilly Craft Creamery, and a potential location for the future MorningSide Café.

Using the Alger once again as an anchor for retail and hub for community engagement, the Restorin' E. Warren team has worked to engage over 675 residents and 30 business owners in an effort to understand the current landscape of the business community and providing both short and long-term strategies to move the corridor forward. In order to develop these strategies more thoroughly, a comprehensive needs assessment was conducted. The assessment included a detailed inventory of all neighborhood assets, utilizing the *Planning to Stay* model. It also included a SWOT Analysis organized around the four pillars of the HOPE Model. Key takeaways from the Needs Assessment include the needs to:

- ▶ Engage the Community in the Needs Assessment Process
- ▶ Create a Desirable Destination.
- ▶ Create Density Along the Corridor
- ▶ Concentrate Initial Development Around the Alger Theater
- ▶ Increase Foot Traffic to the Area
- ▶ Use Temporary Activations to Create Excitement and Further Engage Residents
- ▶ Create a Business and Community Association to Sustain Momentum

The needs assessment identified both short term deliverables that could be completed during the capstone project as well as longer term recommendations that can be carried out in the future. One important consideration throughout the project was identifying a strategy to ensure that the work of the capstone project continues beyond the work of the team. Short-term initiatives include marketing the existing commercial businesses, monthly or bi-monthly block builds, daily and monthly pop-up business activations to increase foot traffic to area businesses, and the continuation of a newly



formed business/community association. Longer term action proposals include creating an Eastside Tool Library and Woodshop; establishing a commercial real estate investment cooperative; securing pop up space for entrepreneurs to test their business ideas, and working with the City of Detroit and Detroit Greenways Coalition to build a recreational trail between Balduck and Chandler Parks, including a protected lane along E. Warren.

Most of the short term deliverables came together in a community engagement initiative held at and around the Alger Theater on October 14, 2017. Working with the Friends of the Alger as the project community partner, the team planned and sponsored a half-day event intended to create a buzz among attendees about the possibility for the redevelopment of East Warren. The goal for this event was to implement these activities at a scale compatible with the team's capacity but also to create momentum that attracts sustainable support from the community once the project is completed. Highlights from the event included pop up business activations for existing and potential entrepreneurs to test their business ideas, a simple block build that garners creativity and interaction along E. Warren, and fun activities to draw traffic to the event. The highlight of the event was a twenty-six foot interactive E. Warren corridor display to drive discussion and feedback from businesses and residents about the current business environment and future wants/needs. Following the event, the team launched a website to continue engaging the community and to provide resources for potential business owners along the corridor. A newly formed business and community association was also convened to continue this work after the completion of the project. Based on the work to date, a number of key recommendations were established including detailed implementation guidelines, timetables, conceptual budgets and possible funding sources for completion. Highlights from these recommendations include:

- ▶ Finding permanent space for future pop up business activations.
- ▶ Working with public sector to improve local infrastructure and increase walkability.
- ▶ Identifying neighborhood needs and utilizing periodic block builds to test New solutions out..
- ▶ Expanding and building on the newly established Business and Community Association.
- ▶ Increasing inclusive programming along the corridor.
- ▶ Identifying a site for an Eastside Woodshop and Tool Library.
- ▶ Establishing a for-profit entity where community members can invest in property and projects.
- ▶ Working with City and County officials to establish parameters for a Recreational Trail connecting the neighborhoods through increased walkability.

The ultimate goal of this project is to provide a framework to help E. Warren gain 100% business occupancy along the corridor by 2022.

# INTRODUCTION



The City of Detroit has long suffered from disinvestment in its urban core. A large number of interwoven factors have contributed to the dramatic decline of the city including, but not limited to, extreme segregation, deindustrialization, financial crisis, and a rapidly declining population base. However, reports of the demise of Detroit may be premature. The city's motto translates to "It will rise from the ashes," and there are indications that Detroit is doing just that. The City of Detroit is in the early stages of making a dramatic comeback. Some would argue this is thanks to a few individuals like Dan Gilbert and Mike Ilitch, who have invested heavily in downtown Detroit over the past few years. Alternatively, some would point to the successful commercial development occurring in neighborhoods like Midtown and Corktown as fueling the resurgence. Others would say it was a cohesive development strategy powered by a new city administration and planning department, or the Detroit Future City framework that has helped Detroit turn the corner. Most would agree that the many grassroots community groups scattered throughout the City deserve much credit for holding down the fort. In actuality, all of these reasons and others have worked together to begin to move the City forward. Despite the current optimism expressed about Detroit's comeback, many believe that if efforts do not focus on neighborhood development, they will fail. Sometimes local leaders develop neighborhood strategies by working with area colleges and universities who have academic programs that focus on urban design and community development. One such program is the Master of Community Development Program (MCD) at the University of Detroit Mercy.

## The Master of Community Development Program

The Master of Community Development Program (MCD) at the University of Detroit Mercy aims to create a holistic approach to the theory and practice of community development. Its foundation is rooted in service, social justice, and sustainability. The program introduces students to the complex and interdisciplinary nature of community development known as the HOPE Model (Human, Organizational, Physical, and Economic). As part of the MCD program, students form teams and devote nine months to a Capstone

project, creating a proposal to address challenges in a particular neighborhood located within the City of Detroit or the surrounding area.

### HOPE Model

One of the unique aspects of the MCD Program is the emphasis on a holistic approach to community engagement that focuses equally on human, organizational, physical, and economic development. Human development emphasizes the relationship between people and their social and physical environment, facilitating an understanding of the dynamic nature of human development in context. The study of organizational development emphasizes how communities can organize to address their human, economic and physical conditions. This focus ensures equitable community building for the benefit of both majority and underserved populations. Physical development emphasizes the human-built environment and its importance to the creation of community. It examines the relationship between physical conditions (built and natural environments) and the economic, social and environmental sustainability of communities that lead to the creation of new developments. Finally, economic development emphasizes the complex role of economics in community development.

### The Three S's

Surrounding the four pillars of the HOPE Model is a three-part philosophical and ethical foundation labeled the three S's: service, social justice, and sustainability. Each of



these principles is unique yet interrelated. Together they provide “the ideological base that fosters the development of leaders in community development that possess a value system that recognizes and promotes the growth of all individuals, are holistic in their approach to community development, and are motivated by a constant need to enhance and achieve communities that are self-sustaining and just” (Detroit Mercy Online Graduate Catalog - MCD Program).

### Why E. Warren?

The Restorin’ E. Warren Team chose E. Warren Avenue for many reasons. There is a legacy of robust business support organizations along the corridor like the Cornerstone, East English Village, Morningside Business Association (CEMBA) and the East Warren Business Association (EWBA). They ran for many years along East Warren, and although today there has been no active association since 2009, the buildings and infrastructure remain for this to once again become a thriving commercial corridor. Another reason the team chose E. Warren was the fact that the neighborhoods around the corridor are stable and enjoy a history of substantial resident involvement and support. East English Village, for instance, was just named Detroit’s best neighborhood by Curbed Detroit and the area has one of the highest consumer expenditures in the city. However, it has had very little retail to reflect that. One of the critical factors for the Restorin’ E. Warren team choosing this area was that one team member was already living in the area and had already begun the research that helped provide a strong foundation for the work that has been carried out.

### Project Overview and Goals

Like many of the commercial strips located in the neighborhoods of Detroit, E. Warren has been in a steady state of decline for several decades. A robust and vibrant commercial corridor is vital for improved quality of life of the MorningSide, East English Village, and Cornerstone Village neighborhoods. As Detroit developed into a booming city, its boundaries began to expand, and Detroiters began to move out to the farmlands and resort properties along Lake Saint Clair. Soon the area on the far-east side of the city was being transformed into an attractive residential area. As the population density increased, businesses and retail establishments along E. Warren were expanding and thriving. Between 1930 and 1954, the number of enterprises rose from 21 to 161 along a 0.8-mile length along E. Warren between Bedford and Guilford. The identified area is particularly important as it cuts across the three neighborhoods and contains the historic Alger Theater, that opened on E. Warren and Outer Drive in 1935 and quickly established itself as a vital community anchor. The Restorin’ E. Warren Team has identified this area as the focus for this project.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVE:**

**TO CREATE A REVITALIZATION STRATEGY TO INVIGORATE BUSINESS ALONG E. WARREN AVE AND TO ENCOURAGE FOOT TRAFFIC TO THE CORRIDOR BY ATTRACTING FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS TO THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS. THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS TO BRING 100% BUSINESS OCCUPANCY TO CORRIDOR BY 2022.**

Today, this commercial corridor suffers from high vacancy rates and disrepair. Approximately two-thirds of the buildings along this strip are vacant. Although the three neighborhoods contain an impressive number of community organizations, none of them is focused on commercial development. Additionally, East Warren lacks a corridor champion. For this reason, the team believes that establishing a business and community association is vital to the long-term sustainability of business and engagement across the three neighborhoods.

This project will provide a framework to invigorate the businesses along E. Warren Avenue. Since the Alger Theater is acknowledged to be a critical anchor institution along the commercial strip, the Restorin' E. Warren Team has partnered with the Friends of Alger Theater as its community partner organization. The framework will include several interrelated strategies focused on revitalizing a 0.8-mile strip of E. Warren, between Bedford Road, west of the theater, and Guilford Street, to the east. Once completed, revitalization would extend into the three neighborhoods of MorningSide, East English Village, and Cornerstone Village. Some of the strategies the team will use include temporary activations, block builds, pop-up business opportunities and other strategies to increase foot traffic in the area immediately surrounding the Alger Theater. These techniques will engage community members and demonstrate potential development activities that residents find valuable and attractive. To sustain this work, the team will cultivate the development of a business/community association to ensure that development is continued and gets accomplished in a manner that best supports the needs of the business owners and residents from the communities that border the commercial corridor. Finally, the team will identify specific recommendations for future steps towards a vibrant and organized commercial corridor.





# HISTORICAL CONDITIONS



## Early History

As stated earlier, the team’s study area encompasses three adjacent neighborhoods: MorningSide, East English Village and Cornerstone Village. Although each exhibits its unique, distinctive character, they share a common early history. In 1981, Patricia Scollard Painter gathered research about these communities and compiled a detailed early history of the area entitled *DEAR – A Community History*. The acronym DEAR stands for Detroit East Area Residents. DEAR was a precursor to the current community identities that exist today. The following historical account is drawn mainly from her research.

The French were the first to settle in this area during the 1600s. In 1701, Antoine de La Mothe Cadillac established a settlement at Detroit. The French built several forts designed to protect the fur trade, and the village began to expand along the river. Farmers began to settle and cultivate long, narrow strips of land, which fronted on the river and became known as “ribbon” farms. In 1737, the first official claims granted on the east side belonged to families such as Campeau, Beaubien, and Moran. The furthest claim east was P.C. 26 at Grosse Pointe, which was owned by Joseph St. Jean. A map of private claims from the area in 1810 appears on the next page. Over the next seventy years, population growth was very modest since the Detroit settlement was more of an outpost and far beyond the cutting edge of the British or American frontier.

In 1805, Michigan became a territory and designated Detroit as its capital. This timeframe also marked the beginning of when land claims were required to be registered. The farms remained relatively the same for almost one hundred years, although many deeds expanded to twice their length around 1812, and a trail (now Harper Ave.) became the back boundary.

Over the next five years, five ribbon farms belonging to the Little, Rivard, Socier, Fournier, and Tremble families were combined to form the area subdivided into the residential neighborhood bounded by Outer Drive, Mack Avenue, Harper Avenue, and Cadieux Road; today these are the boundaries of what is called East English Village (EEV).



*Photo courtesy of Library of Congress.*

EEV first developed as a French settlement with reliable access to Lake Saint Clair and the Detroit River. Eventually, the ribbon farms were redeveloped into subdivisions for housing and the EEV neighborhood, in particular, evolved into a middle-class housing community to meet the needs of workers and their families at the time of Detroit's automotive boom.

### Impact of Industrialization on the Neighborhood

Early in the 20th century, Detroit had developed into a booming city, and soon the east side was being transformed into an attractive residential area. The first area subdivision was established in 1913 by the Investment Land Company and called Grosse Pointe Manor. It included land along Audubon, Whittier, and Kensington streets between Mack and

Warren Avenues, once part of the Moran (formerly Fournier) farm. Today this area is included in East English Village, a neighborhood within the boundaries of Outer Drive, Cadieux, Mack Ave and I-94. Other subdivisions followed, and by about 1925 most of the area had been subdivided into lots. The actual construction of homes, however, didn't begin to boom until about 1928, with much of it taking place in the early 1930's. Many of the homes were independently designed and took on a distinctive character. Most houses are brick, two-story buildings and many contain fireplaces, hardwood moldings and floors, plaster walls, and molded plaster wall and ceiling decoration.

### Early Business Development

As the residential areas continued to develop, businesses sprang up along Harper, Warren, and Mack Avenues. By the late 1920s business districts had been established just east of Conner, with scattered shops (a glazier, a produce stand, a dairy) as far east as the intersection of Warren and Mack. By that time, the city paved Harper and Warren, and streetcars regularly traveled those streets. Businesses soon began to move eastward. During the 1930s such enterprises as Sheppler's Cleaners, Vergote's Poultry and Fish Market, Kanellos Shoes, the Yorkshire Tavern, and the Vogue Theatre were established on Harper Avenue. The Alger Theatre was built on Warren Avenue during that decade, along with the Kensington postal station and businesses such as the Niagara Cleaners, Maryland-Warren



***E. Warren Commercial Corridor – 1937. Courtesy of Detroit Yes.***

Towing, Sander's Confectionary, Glendenning' grocery, George Argo's real estate and construction firm, and D.J. Healey's apparel store settled there. By 1940 there were enough businesses to organize the East Warren Businessmen's Association (EWBA).

Much of this new development was the result of industrialization in the city, led at first by the automotive industry and later by the conversion to military vehicle production to aid the war effort. By the early 1940s, Detroit was at its industrial peak, leading the nation in recovering from the Great Depression. In *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*, Thomas Sugrue recounts the emergence of Detroit as an industrial powerhouse. He remarked that between 1940 and 1947, "manufacturing employment in Detroit increased by 40 percent, a rate surpassed only by Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago. Demand for heavy industrial goods skyrocketed during World War II, and Detroit's industrialists positioned themselves to take advantage of the defense boom" (19). Due to high demand for manufacturing labor, Detroit began to attract workers from all over the country. According to Sugrue, "The rapid expansion of wartime production drastically reduced unemployment in the city. Between 1940 and 1943, the number of unemployed workers in Detroit fell from 135,000 to a mere 4,000" (19).

### Commercial Growth

The 1940s saw a rapid influx of businesses move into the area. Valente's Jewelry, the Yorkshire Building, the E. Warren Studio, along with several gasoline stations and grocery stores began operating on Warren Avenue. The Yorkshire Market opened in the mid-1940s on Mack Avenue which the city paved in 1948. During World War II, businesses actively supported the war effort. Bond drives were sponsored by the East Warren Businessman's Association and by shops offering incentives (a dozen eggs for a \$25 bond, a dressed chicken for a \$50 bond at Vergote's) to buyers. Parties and parades with floats were regular occurrences in support of the war effort.

A review of Polk's Detroit City directory information affirms the rapid growth on the East Warren Business Corridor between Three Mile Road and Guilford Street. In the 1930-31 directory, there were 21 businesses listed between Three Mile Road and Guilford. By 1940, the number had grown to 79, and by 1954, the strip had a total of 161 businesses established. By 1954, the corridor housed some noteworthy neighborhood anchors such as the Alger Theater, Sanders Confectionary, Grinnell's Brothers Music, Cunningham's Drug Store and Awrey's Bakery; as well as many independent establishments serving practically all resident's needs.

Like other neighborhoods in Detroit, the far east-side became home to many of the industrial workers who came to Detroit to find work. In its heyday, Detroit was host to over 125 automotive companies. Although the neighborhoods of East English Village, Cornerstone Village, and MorningSide did not develop in the shadows of giant factories,



the Eastside did have a significant number of manufacturing facilities. Two of the most prominent eastside plants were the Packard Motor Car Company Complex and the Hudson Jefferson Plant. Many of the residents that settled in the target neighborhoods relied on public transportation or newly constructed freeways to get to their work locations. During the 1950s as a result of deindustrialization and automation, the number of manufacturing jobs decreased at an alarming pace. According to Sugrue, “Detroit’s Packard Plant and Hudson plant closed in the mid-1950s. Between 1953 and 1960, Detroit’s East Side lost ten plants and 71,137 jobs” (104). This devastating job loss was the story across the entire region.

Despite the growing influence of the automotive industry on development, not all of the homes built in this area were constructed to house the influx of factory workers. Many of the people who settled in this area were affluent professionals, including many lawyers, doctors, dentists, teachers, and merchants. These neighborhoods also attracted city workers, police officers, and firefighters. There were several immigrant groups represented throughout the area, including people of Italian and Polish background. However, the most significant ethnic group consisted of people from Belgium who had settled in Leesville, a small village located where Harper and Gratiot intersect today. During the 1870s and 1880s, many Belgian immigrants moved eastward from Leesville and settled in the MorningSide neighborhood. By about 1950, construction in the area had virtually ended. There were few vacant lots at this time, as they quickly were acquired by residents

who wanted double-lot yards, or who reserved the property for later use by their families. The population in this area remained stable until the early 1980s.

### Deindustrialization

A significant historical trend that has adversely influenced the study area is the rapid deindustrialization that occurred throughout the region beginning in the 1950s and 1960s. From the beginning, Detroit built its fortunes on manufacturing. Although Detroit is best known as the home of the automotive industry, its growth temporarily stalled during World War II. Because of its demonstrated strength as an automobile manufacturer, Detroit was a perfect location to gear up the war machine. Detroit's auto industry rapidly transitioned to handle the production of weapons and war vehicles, so factories began to crank out tanks, bombers, and jeeps. According to the Detroit Historical Museum, during the peak of wartime production, 25% of all wartime materials were produced in Detroit. The city continued to grow following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, as close to 400,000 additional workers mostly from the south moved to Detroit to join the war effort including 50,000 African Americans who came north to pursue the American dream. Entire neighborhoods of single-family dwellings popped up around the many automotive plants. By 1950, 70% of Detroit's population lived in single-family houses, and the 1950 census reported the peak population of over 1.8 million people.

<b>Conner Corridor Plant Closings and Openings</b>		
<b>Factories Closed</b>	<b>Factories Opened</b>	
Eight Mile Stamping	Viper Plant	200
Outer Drive Stamping	Mack Ave. 1	1,000
Lynch Rd. Assembly	Mack Ave. 2	700
Detroit Forge	GM Assembly	4,500
Huber Foundry	Jefferson Assembly	5,000
Cadillac Conner		
Fruehauf		
Dodge Main		
Amplex Division		
Mack Ave. Stamping		
Jefferson Assembly		
<b>Total Loss of Jobs - Approximately 75,000</b>	<b>Total Jobs Gained - Approximately 11,400</b>	

*Job loss calculation – 1970 - 1990. Courtesy of Ernie Zachary.*

So what has happened since then? The decline of Detroit is a complicated mix of complex factors and is beyond the scope of this study. Indeed, several books have chronicled the city's economic rise and the reasons for its collapse. Throughout the existing literature on this topic, several thematic ideas appear, yet most authors point to deindustrialization as one of the driving influences. In a *Washington Post* article, Brad Plumer stated, "All told, the number of manufacturing jobs in Detroit proper fell from 296,000 in 1950 to just 27,000 in 2011." This 90% job loss is one explanation why residents could not sustain a vibrant commercial corridor.

### The Decline of Commercial Development in the Area

During the 1950s and 1960s stores had begun to leave the area as shopping malls with ample free parking and many shops opened in the suburbs. Some businesses, such as Allemon Florist (1956) opened to take their places, and some establishments began to change hands. In 1965 George Abbey's landscaped garden lot at Warren and Bishop was purchased by Manufacturer's Bank, which built a much-needed branch there.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, more businesses left the area, and empty storefronts were a common sight on these streets. This decrease in commercial activity resulted finally in such events as the razing of the Vogue Theatre in 1979 to make way for a McDonald's franchise. The community viewed this with much concern and even some anger, but the franchise owners worked with neighbors to reach compromises which helped make the situation more acceptable. Also in 1979, the East Warren Businessmen's Association received a federal grant which enabled them to renovate and beautify the sidewalks and parking areas along Warren Avenue. The work took about a year and resulted in a more attractive shopping area with substantially increased parking facilities.

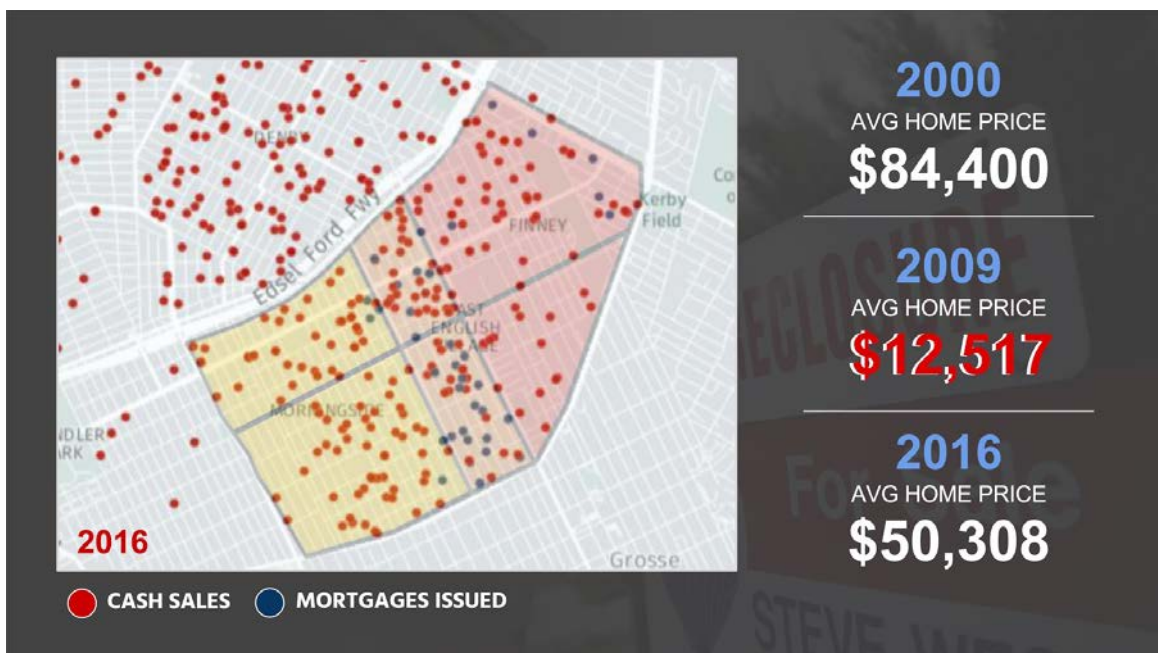
Beginning in the early 1980s, the state of the economy has forced the closing of still more area businesses, notably the McDonald's Ford dealership on Mack in 1980. In the fall of 1980, the East Warren Businessmen's Association celebrated its fortieth anniversary with a parade on Warren. Despite stormy weather, hundreds of community residents lined the avenue to watch, and many visited the display of historic photos, artifacts and documents exhibited in the Detroit Police Mini-Station, seemingly demonstrating their interest in and support of the businesses in the community.

Since that time, the commercial corridor has continued to decline. In a radio talk entitled "Future uncertain for most business districts outside of downtown Detroit," Lester Graham points out that "population loss and the loss of wealth in the neighborhoods have created hard times for area businesses." This effect is particularly the case along the East Warren Commercial Corridor. The radio talk highlighted several long-standing business owners who weighed in on the former vibrancy along the corridor. "Eastern Warren used to be a major shopping spot," said Bill Kamman, owner of Hammer Time True Value hardware

store. (Note: Hammer Time closed in 2017). “There were businesses in every building on Warren,” explained Marilyn Nash Yazbeck who owns Nottingham Pharmacy. “No matter what you needed, you could find it on Warren Avenue: the grocery stores, the party stores, the library, the movie theater, the bike store,” Patrick Maher of Eastside Locksmith said. Bran Piekielek of Bike Tech continued, “...the tailor, an arcade, a woodworking store, five and dime, whatever.” Today the story is very different. According to MorningSide resident Eric Dueweke, about 50 percent of the businesses are boarded up. In other locations, entire buildings have been torn down. As the following section illustrates, demand is also down because there is not as much wealth in this neighborhood. Homeownership is down dramatically since the foreclosure crisis, so many of the area’s residents are renters. Since much of the neighborhood lacks disposable income due to high rent payments, it’s risky for new businesses to fill those vacant storefronts.

### The Housing and Mortgage Crisis

Despite the tremendous job loss and mounting financial challenges facing the city, these neighborhoods remained relatively stable until the mortgage crisis ended the housing boom for the community. According to Joel Kurth and Mike Wilkinson of *Bridge Magazine* after the foreclosure crisis in 2009, the average Detroit home sale price was just \$12,517. However, Detroit home prices began to rebound to \$50,308 in 2016. A 2013 CNN Money



**Home Sales – 2016-17. Courtesy of Bridge Magazine.**



report lists 48224, the zip code where East English Village, MorningSide and most of Cornerstone Village are located, as one of the hardest hit foreclosure zip codes in America - ranking as the 22nd hardest hit zip code in America with 402 total filings. In The Community Research Institute's 2012 report on historical foreclosure estimates, Isley and Rotondara report, "A total of \$63 billion of Michigan's housing value disappeared between 2006 and 2010. This decline in housing value is around twenty percent of that which existed in 2006."

Although home sale prices are rebounding according to a recent study from ATTOM Data Solutions published by the *Detroit Free Press*, 48224 has the 5th highest amount of mortgages underwater in the entire country with 8,974 properties with loans: 69.4% properties seriously underwater (Ma). Diane McCloskey, MorningSide neighborhood resident and Former Director of the Detroit Foreclosure Prevention and Response Initiative, remarked:

Our zip was at the top of the foreclosure lists 2008-12 for two reasons. We had a very high percentage of single-family homeowners, many who bought in the 90s and early 2000s when values were high and an increasing proportion of refinancing/second mortgages with people improving their homes or taking out their equity for other reasons. Many homes were overvalued then, and on our block, five lost their homes that way. Financing was very easy then - as was fraud. Some folks have struggled and stuck it out. Others who didn't lose their mortgage later gave up hope and lost to taxes.

Community organizing and leveraging resources have always been a vital component to how the neighborhood has been able to sustain itself through the tough times. Margaret Dewar and Lan Deng, Urban and Regional Planning Professors at the University of Michigan, studied how East English Village and MorningSide were able to make it through the foreclosure crisis "These neighborhoods had the social capital to tap into," Deng said. "As the people who could make collective efforts to stabilize their neighborhoods, their success or failure determined the future of their neighborhoods as well as the future of the city." The East English Village Community Association was a vital factor in how EEV sustained itself through the foreclosure crisis with 64 block captains for the 64 blocks of East English Village, 8 street reps, a 20-member resident board and multiple committees allowed East English Village to sustain itself.

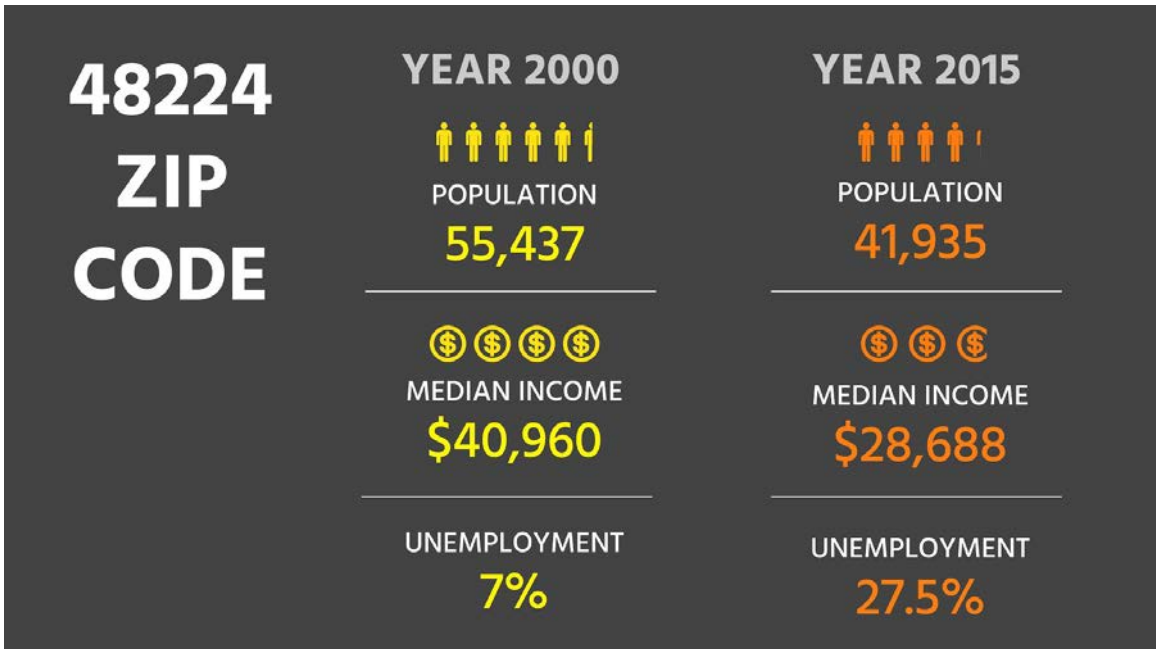
After the foreclosure crisis, it has been a challenge for most of the neighborhood to fully rebound regarding property values. As pointed out in the March 2017 *Bridge Magazine* article last year there were only 710 mortgages citywide as compared to between the 3,300 to 6,800 that occurred in cities like Memphis, Columbus, and El Paso, which share similar populations like those in Detroit. Property values in most of the city have not reached the

magic \$50,000 mark which is a standard benchmark for mortgage lending to occur making most transactions in those neighborhoods cash sales.

# DEMOGRAPHICS








The neighborhoods of East English Village, MorningSide, and Cornerstone Village are all part of the 48224 zip code. According to American FactFinder, the total population for 48224 was 55,437 in 2000. By 2015, the population had decreased to 41,935, a reduction of 24.4% (City-Data). Although this is a significant decrease in residents, the percentage reduction was lower than the 28.9% reduction realized by the city as a whole. The racial composition of the 48224 zip code changed more than in the city at large. In 2000, African Americans comprised 79.2% of all residents, while Whites accounted for 17.7%. The remaining population was a mix of Hispanic, Asian and other ethnicities. By 2015, the black community in 48224 had increased by about 9% while the percentage of white residents decreased to 8.6%. In contrast, the citywide racial composition over the same time



remained more constant, with a one percent reduction in black residents and a one percent increase in white residents. The mix of the rest of the population has approximately remained the same.

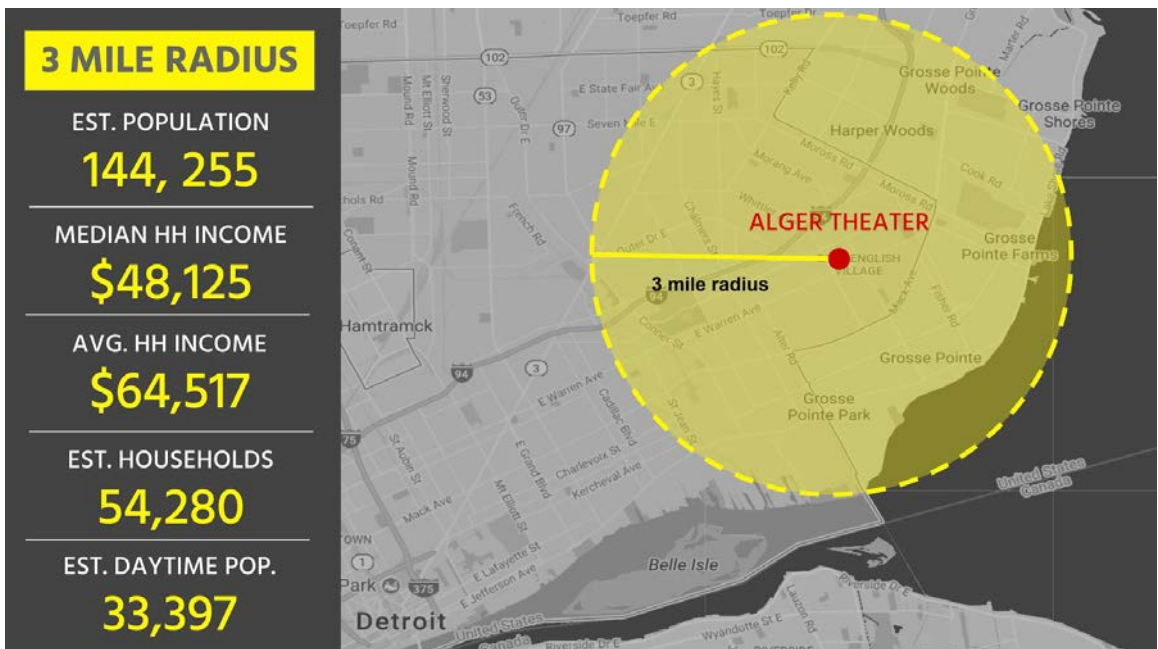
To better understand what happened in the neighborhoods, demographic data in the 48224 zip code was compared with the City of Detroit and Wayne County. Median household income, the number of housing units, the percentage of residents living below poverty, the percentage of vacant housing units, and the percentage of owner-occupied homes were examined. In the year 2000, the median income for Detroit was just under \$30,000. In comparison, 48224 was doing well at this time with a median income nearly 28% higher than that of Detroit- in fact, it was higher than the median wages of all of Wayne County. In 2010, this number nearly halves. With the crash of the auto industry and the financial housing crisis, this zip code lost a lot of its affluent community members. Because of those that moved, one can understand why the vacancy rates rose, and the owner-occupied rates lowered. One curious statistic is that even though the number of residents below the poverty level continues to be above the city and county rate, it remained constant despite the mortgage crisis and the disinvestment in this area.

										
	MEDIAN INCOME		HOUSING UNITS		BELOW POVERTY		VACANT HOUSING		OWNER OCCUPIED	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
48224	\$40,960	\$26,688	19,837	19,244	38%	37%	6%	28%	72%	58%
DETROIT	\$29,526	\$25,764	375,096	365,528	31%	36%	10%	30%	49%	51%
WAYNE	\$40,776	\$41,210	826,145	821,693	19%	20%	7%	18%	67%	65%

## MAKING THE CASE FOR COMMERCIAL VIABILITY

According to the *Census Business Builder: Small Business Edition*, the census tracts 5104 and 5108 that make up the area of East English Village and Morningside are two of the most lucrative census tracts for consumer expenditures in the city. These two census tracts also have a median income of \$43,740, which is \$17,645 more than the average City of Detroit's Median income of \$26,095. Census tract 5014 and 5018 have a combined total of 8712 residents whose total consumer expenditures were \$174,298,207. Of that total, \$70,279,704 was spent that year on restaurant food, entertainment, alcohol, and clothing, which averages out to \$8,067 per person according to the 2014 Consumer Expenditure Survey. As a whole, all three neighborhoods, Morningside, East English Village, and Cornerstone have a total population of 27,402 (Figure 1) and for the same four categories collectively spent \$221,051,934 (Figure 2). A 2012 Urban Land Institute study of Detroit's retail capacity states:

The city's retail leakage is estimated by the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) to be in excess of \$1.5 billion annually, which translates into demand for roughly an additional 8 million square feet of retail space in the city across all retail sectors—the demographic data for this part of the city suggest that the corridor is underperforming its economic potential.



<b>Population Breakdown of Focus Area</b>	
Morningside, Alter to Bedford	9,410
East English Village/MorningSide, Bedford to Cadieux	8,712
Cornerstone	9,280
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,402</b>

**Figure 1**

<b>Money Spent by Focus Area Population</b>	
Apparel	\$47,679,480
Food (Outside of the home)	\$74,314,224
Alcohol	\$13,289,970
Entertainment	\$85,768,260
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$221,051,934</b>

**Figure 2**

<b>Average Spent by Individual Detroit Resident</b>	
Apparel	\$1,740
Food (Outside of the home)	\$2,712
Alcohol	\$485
Entertainment	\$3,130
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,067</b>

**Figure 3**

Figure 3 is a breakdown of the data above based on the number of dollars an average individual spends per year in the City of Detroit. These four categories were selected as they are the four consumer expenditures that directly relate to commercial corridor spending. These four standard commercial corridor functions lose the majority of \$221,051,934 that would sustain a business corridor to other communities or big box stores.

# ASSET MAPPING



Asset mapping is a technique used to identify strengths and resources of a community and to address community needs to stabilize and enhance a neighborhood. It is easiest to visualize these forces once assets are inventoried and depicted on a map. Determining what constitutes a community asset is not as straightforward as it sounds - the voice of stakeholders and community members must be included to provide a complete picture. The Restorin' E. Warren team conducted a preliminary study of the target area to develop a starting point for identifying community assets. Study methods included windshield surveys, walking tours, online research, attendance at community meetings and special events, and personal interviews and interactions with residents and business owners. The team defined a community asset as anything that improves the quality of community life. Assets include capacities; abilities and connections of community members; existing buildings and open spaces; local businesses that provide residents with essential goods and services as well as employment opportunities; community groups and associations; and local private, public, and nonprofit institutions or organizations. For purposes of this asset mapping study, the team defined the study area as the communities of MorningSide, East English Village, and Cornerstone Village. As the team identified various assets, they were added to a master list to aid in the categorization and sorting process.

## **ASSETS ACCORDING TO THE PLANNING TO STAY AND HOPE MODELS**

### Planning to Stay

One way of categorizing assets is to examine them in the context the of methodology outlined in *Planning to Stay* by William Morrish and Catherine Brown. The preface to the book asks residents and merchants to reflect on two questions: “What is it about this place that draws us near,” and “what could we add to this place that will keep us here in the future?” These two questions form the foundation for an examination of current neighborhood strengths (what keeps us here) and opportunities (what could we add). The framework outlined in the book suggests a close examination of five major physical

features - homes and gardens, community streets, neighborhood niches, anchoring institutions, and public gardens. It suggests analyzing each of these elements along five organizing themes – location, scale, mix, time and movement. When combined, this methodology will identify the essential local characteristics of the physical features and identify issues that are important to the community. In this analysis, the team will focus on how this methodology impacts the commercial corridor under study. Since both the physical features and the organizing themes provide details as to the quality of life for residents, this method also helps to identify whether the neighborhoods surrounding the commercial corridor can be considered "complete neighborhoods." In other words, the *Planning to Stay* methodology provides additional insight into the presence or lack of safety and stability; diverse housing options; quality parks and greenspace; quality schools; a variety of quality commercial offerings; access to quality public transit and walkability.

### HOPE Model






As stated earlier, the MCD Program emphasizes a holistic approach to community engagement that focuses equally on Human, Organizational, Physical, and Economic development. The HOPE Model is one way to assess the adequacy of community assets. The team identified seventy-two items as community assets along and surrounding the targeted area along E. Warren. Of these seventy-two, thirty-seven fall in the Human category, eight in Organizational, ten in Physical, and five in Economic. The remaining twelve are assets that appear as a combination of HOPE elements.

## **ASSETS IDENTIFIED**

For purposes of describing all of the assets identified, the team used the Planning to Stay model to organize neighborhood strengths while addressing the Human, Organizational, Physical, and Economic advantages of each. Since most of the initial asset analysis dealt with physical buildings and locations, these assets were classified by similar groupings and mapped separately. Since the Planning to Stay model focuses primarily on physical assets, it will be supplemented with a brief narrative regarding the Human and Organizational assets which appears at the end of this section. Based on the Planning to Stay methodology, physical assets were broken down further and categorized into the following areas of similarity: schools and libraries; automotive businesses; medical establishments; churches; parks; goods and services; and food establishments. A copy of the individual asset maps appears as **Appendix A**. The assets include a variety of types.

There are thirteen operational schools or daycare centers located throughout the community and surrounding area. Additionally, there are eight active churches in the target



 <b>Homes &amp; Gardens</b>	 <b>Anchoring Institutions</b>	 <b>Community Streets</b>	 <b>Neighborhood Niches</b>	 <b>Public Gardens</b>
<b>H</b> <b>Dense population to support commerce</b>	<b>H</b> <b>Alger Theater</b>	<b>H</b> <b>Potentially bike &amp; transit friendly</b>	<b>H</b> Locally supportive community	<b>H</b> Sports organizations
<b>O</b> <b>Block Clubs / Neighborhood Associations</b>	<b>O</b> Friends of Alger	<b>O</b> <b>Business Association focused on corridor</b>	<b>O</b> EEV Commercial Committee	<b>O</b> Friends of Balduck Park
<b>P</b> Front porches & charismatic bones	<b>P</b> Distinct Architecture	<b>P</b> Direct link to commercial	<b>P</b> <b>High potential space available</b>	<b>P</b> <b>Balduck - premier destination park</b>
<b>E</b> Rising home values	<b>E</b> <b>Catalyst for development</b>	<b>E</b> Warren stretches across all 3 neighborhoods	<b>E</b> <b>New development at Alger</b>	<b>E</b> <b>Catalyst for development</b>

neighborhoods. Six additional listings are devoted to health care, care for the elderly and care of pets. The balance of human-related assets contributes in some meaningful way to a better quality life for residents. The area also contains a significant number of organizations focused on enhancing the community, with four of them concentrated on serving a particular geographic area within the target neighborhoods. Although this region contains some vacant properties and buildings in disrepair, the majority of physical assets including the residential and commercial buildings have relatively good bones. The economic assets primarily appear in the various business and retail corridors that line the areas. Highlights from The Planning to Stay/HOPE matrix appears above. Each category will be explored in greater detail.



### Homes and Gardens

*Planning to Stay* defines homes and gardens as the “spaces where we rear our families, sustain our daily existences, display our identities, and contribute to the overall neighborhood image” (26). To better understand the quality of housing stock, the Restorin' E. Warren team spent significant time walking and driving the streets of their target area, focussing primarily on the homes that are immediately adjacent to the commercial corridor. One of the strongest assets in this entire community is the housing stock. Except for the far west end of MorningSide, most homes are occupied and

well maintained, with a majority of the vacant homes boarded up to prevent vandalism and blight. According to the Vacant House Data Feed tool calculator, the zip code of 48224, which encompasses the three neighborhoods in our target area, has an occupancy rate of 78% (Vacant House Data Feed). There was a total of 19,721 houses and condos, and 5,968 renter-occupied apartments in 48224 in 2015 (City-Data). The houses in each of the three neighborhoods have a distinctive design. In MorningSide, most of the homes are brick bungalows with small front lots and fenced in backyards, and the southwest corner of MorningSide contains numerous Habitat for Humanity homes. In East English Village, the homes are larger and more individualized, some having side lots and gardens to beautify the property. Cornerstone Village primarily consists of bungalows constructed with either brick or asbestos siding, mostly designed as single family units, although there were several duplexes noted. Many of the homes in all three neighborhoods contain medium size porches, creating an opportunity for residents to socialize and “keep eyes on the street.” The homes are all similar in size and constructed to the scale of the streets they occupy. Majestic trees line many of the avenues and provide a canopy that enhances the appearance of the community. The houses that line Outer Drive and Chandler Park are slightly more prominent which is consistent with the broader roads they border. Many of the commercial properties along E. Warren contain housing above the commercial strip, and although many of these apartments appear vacant, there are some occupied units.

## GOOD HOUSING & SOLID STREETS



MorningSide Homes



East English Village Homes



Cornerstone Village Homes



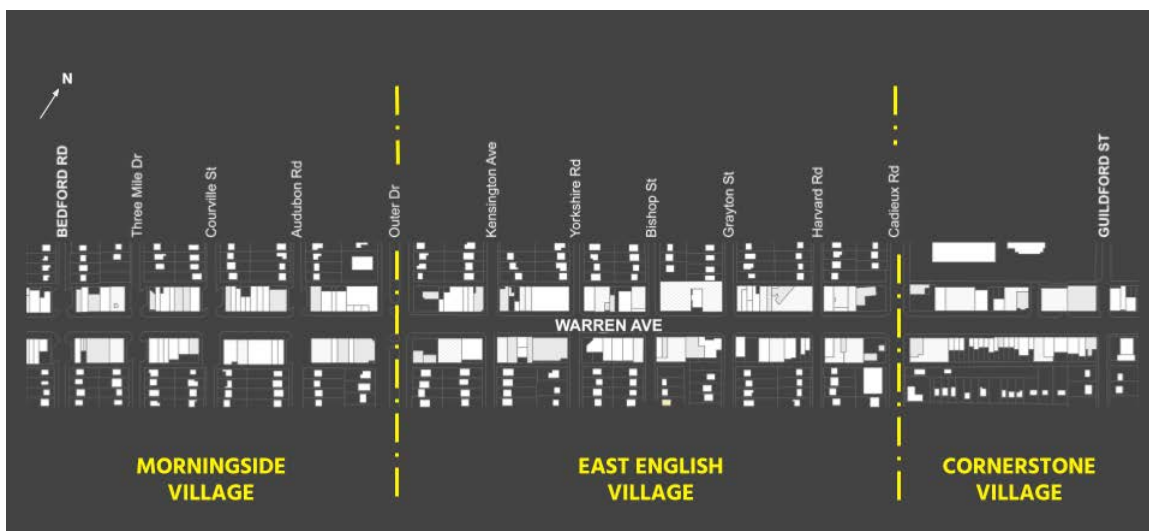


The housing characteristics in the target area support the potential of this becoming a "complete neighborhood." This community, unlike much of Detroit, still enjoys reasonable housing density. All three particular neighborhoods consist primarily of single-family houses lined up on both sides of residential streets. The vacant homes that dot the neighborhood have mostly been boarded up instead of being torn down, which also adds to this sense of density. Also, the streets are laid out in a very orderly grid, which makes navigation and direction easy. Finally, there is an orderly buffer zone between the public and private spaces: most homes are set off from strangers by way of curbs, green buffer lawns, sidewalks, small front yards, stoops, and porches. In summary, the homes and gardens in the area are in reasonably good condition. They provide safe havens for residents to go about their lives and are organized and situated in a way that helps establish a sense of community. They connect effectively with the commercial corridors to provide easy access to shopping and transit.



### Community Streets

The *Planning to Stay* text identifies community streets as “lanes that supply a functional and pleasant balance between use by automobiles and pedestrians” (26). The principal north/south routes through the area divide the community into individual neighborhoods. Alter Road and Outer Drive are the eastern and western boundaries of the MorningSide neighborhood; East English Village lies between Outer Drive and Cadieux; Cornerstone Village lies between Cadieux on the west and Mack Avenue on the east. The streets are laid out in an orderly grid, with each providing access to the commercial strips.



Just off Warren Avenue, along many of the side streets, there are several parking areas to limit the need for parking on E. Warren. The target commercial strip contains decorative globe lighting and large concrete planters that give the corridor a distinctive appearance.

Although the commercial corridor appears to be bike friendly with Share the Road signs and bicycle stencils on the pavement in the right-hand lane, they require cyclists to share the right-hand lane with busy automobile traffic. The streets lack a protective buffer, and many bicycles were observed riding on the sidewalk instead of the road.

Numerous bus stops appear along each of the commercial streets. Most of the bus stops are exposed to the elements and are only identified by a small sign. Just two are contained in a shelter or provide a place to sit while waiting for a bus. When touring the area at night, it appears that bus stop lighting is adequate to illuminate the stop. Although some of these stops feel isolated, they still create concerns about safety.

Most of the streets seem active during the daytime, with residents out mowing their lawns, sitting on their porches, or riding their bikes. Balduck Park is especially busy during the day. Because this is primarily a residential area, the streets in the neighborhood have decent walkability and available access for both cyclists and vehicles. The orderly organization and proximity to major commercial strips support the notion of a "complete neighborhood," however, the team noticed that besides the two covered bus stop benches, there are no resting places on the street. This lack of seating appears to discourage social interaction and inhibits shoppers from spending more leisurely time on the corridor. Also, the previously noted lack of protected bike lanes makes this an automobile-centered neighborhood, which detracts from the idea of this being a walkable shopping destination because drivers are inclined to go through this part of the city, rather than stop at it.





### Neighborhood Niches

Morrish and Brown describe neighborhood niches as the places where neighbors “purchase the necessary goods and services as well as some of the specialty items that support their daily activities” (26). These are areas where individuals gather for conversation and connection. They also add identity and character to a neighborhood. If sufficient in number, they can aid a community in its endeavor to function as a “complete neighborhood.” There appear to be several “neighborhood niches” in the target area, including automotive businesses, medical establishments, food businesses and goods and services.

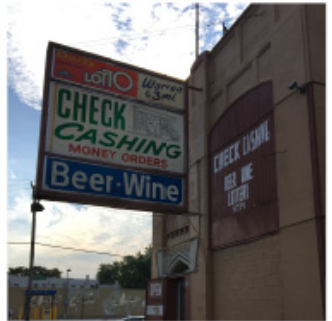
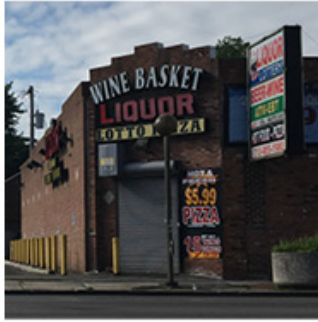
The automotive businesses within the target area concentrate along the three commercial corridors of Harper Ave, E. Warren Ave, and Mack Ave. They consist of gas stations, car dealerships, car washes, and car maintenance shops. These businesses provide essential automotive services to the community as well as fulfill significant economic development.

The Medical layer of the asset map shows a compilation of pharmacies, clinics, and hospitals to fitness centers, a dentist office, physical therapy and rehabilitation facilities. This layer also covers a significant portion of human development in that it not only includes the physical but the mental health of the community as well. Adequate mental health support is especially critical in African American communities. According to *Family Functioning and Stress in African American Families: A Strength-Based Approach*, many internal and external factors cause them stress such as family relationships, discrimination, depression, anxiety and daily hassles (Pollock, 148). Thus, the Behavioral Health Services offered by Covenant Community Care is a godsend to this community which aids in tackling these stress inducers.

Food businesses represent all of the food establishments in the target area. The enterprises range from fast food restaurants to small grocers and neighborhood niche cafes. These locations also garner connection and communication as well as economic development within the community.

The products and services provided along E. Warren include barber and beauty shops, dollar stores, cell phone stores, dry cleaners, and laundromats. Some of these businesses can also be defined as neighborhood niches because they are places where people gather for communication and connection, and they add character and culture to the community. They also contribute to the community’s economic development.

One East English Village resident, Jermaine Jones stated that he gathers with friends at Reggie’s Barber Shop on Warren Avenue and the Harvard Grill, located in Grosse Pointe,



just south on Mack Avenue and across the street from the southern border of East English Village. Rhonda McGigor has lived in East English Village for the past 28 years. Rhonda reported that she and many of her friends shop at Del-Pointe Grocery and often dine at Louie's Ham and Corned Beef because the staff is very respectable. Both establishments reside on the northern border of East English Village along Harper Avenue. Another East English Village resident, Maretta Jackson noted that the neighborhood lost a vital neighborhood niche right in the middle of the targeted commercial corridor recently when Hammer Time True Value hardware store closed its doors after its owner retired.

Although there are many vacant properties along Warren Avenue, some businesses have survived including several eateries, dry cleaners, beauty salons, and barber shops to name a few. Despite the fact that there are a variety of neighborhood niches along the commercial strips of E. Warren, they are not sufficiently diversified to consider this a "complete neighborhood."



### Anchoring Institutions

According to Morrish and Brown, anchoring Institutions are those places where "cultural, educational, and social traditions of a community are centered" (26). These institutions have a significant stake in the community they anchor and play a major role in structuring the social patterns that occur. Without these anchors to stabilize a neighborhood and to help shape its identity, communities would lack one of the critical elements of a "complete neighborhood."

There were several prominent anchor institutions located along or near the targeted commercial corridor. One such community anchor is the historic Alger Theater. According to its website, the Friends of the Alger Theater (the Friends) are a "volunteer-driven, non-profit community-based organization comprised of neighborhood residents and businesses founded in 1983. The group was formed to address the decay and deterioration encroaching on the neighborhood and to respond to the historical significance of the Alger Theater located at 16451 E. Warren Avenue on Detroit's far east side." Many, if not all of the residents the team spoke with, recognize the Alger as an important anchor institution. There are plans to activate the two commercial properties adjacent to the theater, and a rooftop terrace will open for use in 2018. Currently, the Friends are devising a strategy to repair the ceiling in the auditorium so that the venue can be made available for use.

Just north of the Alger is another important anchor institution, the Jefferson Branch of the Detroit Public Library. The Jefferson Branch has operated in this neighborhood since 1937. Formerly it occupied a rented space on Warren Avenue and eventually moved to its present location on East Outer Drive in 1951. Inside the library is a small conference room that is often the gathering place for community meetings.





Just north of the Alger is another important anchor institution, the Jefferson Branch of the Detroit Public Library. The Jefferson Branch has operated in this neighborhood since 1937. Formerly it occupied a rented space on Warren Avenue and eventually moved to its present location on East Outer Drive in 1951. Inside the library is a small conference room that is often the gathering place for community meetings.

Another anchor institution located further east, on the western border of Cornerstone Village is the East English Village Preparatory Academy. This location is the site of the former Finney High School which closed in 2009. The Academy opened in 2012, serves grades 9 through 12, and is currently home to over 1,400 students.

Other, more common types of anchoring institutions, include schools, libraries, and churches. With a total of six schools, one library, and eight very active churches within the target area, these assets not only provide stability but also guarantee complete human development in the community. The library, in particular, contributes to positive youth development by offering the *Build A Better World with Littlebits* summer program that empowers kids to invent small easy-to-use electronics. This program encourages creativity, teaches a marketable skill and helps children to thrive. Also, learning in this community setting can prove to be a sustainable portion of a child's development. According to *Empowerment-Based Positive Youth Development: A New Understanding of Healthy Development for African American Youth*, "positive experiences in valued communities can also be the impetus for youth to reinvest their energy into sustaining the quality of these environments when opportunities exist for active and engaged citizenship" (Travis and Leech, 110). The churches in the area represent diverse denominations and bring a sense of

culture and belonging to those in the community. They also contribute to the human development of the community. According to *Family Functioning and Stress in African American Families: A Strength-Based Approach*, “The church has historically played a significant role in buffering societal stress (Mosley-Howard & Burgan Evans, 200), as well as promoting health among African Americans, and operates as a larger system that interacts with families. Specifically, support from relationships within the church decreases stressful feelings (Krause, 84)”.

All of these anchor institutions help provide a sense of belonging and stability. They are important sources of neighborhood identity and remind residents of the community’s heritage. Without anchor institutions such as the churches, schools, and library, the Restorin’ E. Warren team’s target neighborhood would not only fail as a “complete neighborhood” but would not be providing many of the essential ingredients necessary for residents to sustain a quality of life.



### Public Gardens

According to *Planning to Stay*, public gardens “connect us individually and collectively to the natural environment,” (26). They are the public gathering places in neighborhoods, providing for recreational opportunities and gardening. They not only bring residents into proximity with nature, but they also provide “constructed features, such as playgrounds, pools, courts, picnic grounds, pavilions, and sculptures” (Morrish and Brown, 79). These connections with nature are vital elements of a “complete neighborhood” especially when they exist within walking distance of residents and provide recreational activities that enhance the quality of life.

There are four public parks and playgrounds in the surrounding neighborhoods. To the far west, on the corner of Alter and Warren Avenue is Corrigan Park. Corrigan is the smallest of the three community parks but is big enough to feature a baseball diamond and a playscape for younger children. This park is frequently used to host community events and fun family days. To the far southwest corner of Cornerstone Village is Messmer Park. Messmer has a newly renovated baseball diamond and a large playground featuring swings, slides, and monkey bars. The park also features horseshoe pits and paved basketball courts. There is also a sheltered area with picnic tables for outside gatherings and a wide-open field area available for any outdoor activity. Originally slated to be closed in 2013, the park was adopted and is maintained by Motor City Grounds Crew. The most prominent park in the neighborhood is Balduck Park, located in Cornerstone Village. Balduck Park is a 58.31-acre park spanning from Warren Avenue to the south up to Marquette School to the north. It is bordered by Canyon St to the East and Radnor to the west in the heart of Cornerstone Village. Balduck Park features many amenities that are not available at most



Detroit Parks. This park is home to six baseball and softball diamonds, a sledding hill, a large dog park, a short hiking trail, basketball court, new picnic tables and grills, a composting outhouse, soccer field, Eastside Tennis and Fitness Center (Members only club), and at least two playscapes. Anchoring the park is Eagle Sports Club which serves over 2,000 participants per year in its Baseball, Soccer, Flag Football and SOAR Tutoring programs. Since 2013 Eagle Sports has invested over 2 million dollars in the ball diamonds at Balduck Park, and together with the Friends of Balduck Park, they steward the park. In addition to the three public parks, East English Village sponsors Fitness Park at the corner of Cornwall Street and Cadieux Road. Although it is not a publicly owned park, it is accessible for use by anyone.

These public gathering spaces (known as parks) positively contribute to the quality of life for residents. They provide places to accommodate physical activity and social interaction. They also contribute to the mental and physical well-being of residents. Finally, they can serve as a destination attraction that can draw visitors to the commercial corridor that runs through the center of the community.

### Human and Organizational Assets

The Restorin' E. Warren Team spend many hours engaging with community members in the three neighborhoods. The deep level of commitment and willingness to get

involved from residents encountered is a major strength of the neighborhoods. All three have active community associations that focus on the needs of residents within each neighborhood. Although the East English Village Association, Cornerstone Community Association, and MorningSide Community Association primarily focus on their individual jurisdictions, there is evidence that this is changing, and it was noted that at most of the events the team attended, there were generally representatives from all three neighborhoods present. Another human asset is the entrepreneurial spirit exhibited by many community members. All three neighborhoods are home to individuals who have developed home businesses and have expressed interest in temporary pop-up space as well as a more permanent location for their businesses

In addition to the three neighborhood associations, there are four additional organizations that focus on increasing the viability of these neighborhoods. The far-western boundary of MorningSide is home to United States Networking and Planning, Building a Community (U-Snap-Bac). Focused primarily on residential housing, their stated mission is to “empower residents to impact the future of Detroit’s Eastside. Through coalition building, resource development, joint planning and programming, we will promote economic growth and neighborhood improvement” (U Snap Bac). Their work was invaluable in helping the area survive the mortgage and house crisis discussed earlier. Another key organization is the Eastside Community Network (ECN). ECN has been spearheading community development on Detroit's Lower East Side for over 30 years. Their work emphasized resident engagement, multi-sector collaborations, advocacy, leadership development and innovative approaches to land development. Although primarily focused on Mack Avenue, they have also worked with each of the community associations to bring about positive change. A third community association making an impact on the area is MECCA. Mecca’s mission is to “empower and engage residents and businesses across MorningSide, East English Village, and Cornerstone Village with the knowledge, skills, resources, and support to revitalize our communities in a sustainable way for future generations.” Their priority programming areas include housing and infrastructure redevelopment projects, beautification of public spaces, crime prevention and public safety, community service, and education. During the entire capstone project, the leadership of MECCA provided tremendous insight and support at many of the meetings and events the team attended. One of the longest established non-profits in the community is the Friends of the Alger Theater. Although entirely comprised of volunteers, this organization is key to the revitalization of E. Warren, and many residents point to the Alger Theater as key. Although each of these organizations has its distinct mission, there is evidence that they are beginning to coordinate their focus and objectives to the greater good of the area surrounding the E. Warren commercial corridor.

## **ADVANTAGES OF ASSETS**

Asset mapping has proven to be an essential tool for impactful community development. It focuses attention on the positive things an area has to offer rather than highlighting the problems a community is facing. When done correctly, asset mapping can help identify similarly situated communities that serve as case studies for what is possible. When combined with a SWOT Analysis and Needs Assessment, asset mapping can inform recommendations and implementation steps once possible improvement initiatives get identified. Several significant assets are particularly noteworthy for their significance and contribution to this project. Resident commitment and involvement, active community organizations, population density, robust infrastructure, and the presence of remarkable community anchors like the Alger Theater and the Jefferson Branch Library are all assets that contributed to the effectiveness and success of this project.



# NEEDS ASSESSMENT



A needs assessment is a method used to systematically identify the gap between current conditions and the desired state. In the context of community development, a community needs assessment builds on the identification and mapping of existing assets and focuses on those areas where capabilities of community residents, agencies or organizations may fall short. The Restorin' E. Warren team employed several methods to assess the needs along the commercial corridor including historical analysis, driving tours, walking tours, interviews with residents and business owners, attendance at various community meetings, and temporary activation and block build activities. It was important that the team engage with the community early on so that their feedback could direct the capstone's focus in an area that was most representative of the residents and their desires. Team members identified the following list of community needs in their initial assessment:

## Engage the Community in the Needs Assessment Process

One community organization that is active in the neighborhood is the MorningSide, East English Village, Cornerstone Village Community Advocates Development Corporation ("MECCA") The team's initial strategy was to develop a survey to be conducted during MECCA's Annual Street Fair on August 12. However, as the project evolved, we found another method that was suitable and most effective for our project. Inspired by a driving tour down the corridor, we snapped pictures of the 0.8 mile stretch and stitched them together to form a 26ft, small-scale replica of the E. Warren corridor. We teamed up with the Friend's of the Alger Theater to host the Alger in the Alley event on October 14 and erected a panorama. The panorama included the question "What do you want to see?" prompting passersby to use post-it-notes to pin their answers beside a building that they think would best suit their recommendation. The post-it notes were different colors representing East English Village, MorningSide, Cornerstone, and visitors. This approach allowed us to analyze the wants/needs specific to that area.

The team received feedback from ninety-five people with the majority coming from the Cornerstone neighborhood. This information was then compiled and categorized in a

	MorningSide	East English Village	Cornerstone	Vistor	Needs Attention	TOTAL
<b>Anchoring Institutions</b>						
- church						4
- school/educational	XX	X	X			
<b>Arts &amp; Culture</b>						
- artist space	X	XX	XX			6
- gallery			X			
<b>Complete Streets</b>						
- bike lanes		X				6
- curb cuts/facades		X			XX	
- bike rentals	X					
- gardens		X				
<b>Neighborhood Niches</b>						
- meeting spaces		X	X			24
- retail		XXXXXX	XXXXX	XXXX		
- services	X		XXXXX	X		
<b>Recreational</b>						
- youth spaces	XXXX	XX	X			13
- athletic facilities		X	XX	X		
-Entertainment		X				
- public gathering space	X					
<b>Food</b>						
- restaurants	XXXXXXXXXX	XXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX	XXX		37
- groceries	XX	X	X	XX		
-Bakery	X	X				
- markets	XX	X	X			
<b>Interested in Building</b>			XX	X	XXX	6
	24	25	30	12	5	96

spreadsheet. Categories were inspired by the Planning To Stay method and included Anchoring Institutions, Arts & Culture, Complete Streets, Neighborhood Niches, Recreational, Food and, Interest in a vacant building. The results revealed that residents placed a high priority on new restaurants, retail and service spaces. Youth recreation, artist space, and a grocery store are also essential wants/needs of the community.

### Create a Desirable Destination

An effective needs assessment is enhanced when layered upon a formal evaluation of a community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). While compiling the needs assessment, the Restorin' E. Warren team also conducted a SWOT analysis based on the research carried out to date. The team's SWOT analysis appears in a later section of this report. When determining the needs of the E. Warren Commercial Corridor, first and foremost, it needs to become a desirable destination. In other words, people need a reason to come here. The corridor should contain a variety of entertainment



options and retail that furnishes residents with all of the essential elements of a complete neighborhood. For example, it should provide access to healthy food choices, clothing, automobile services, banking, and those additional goods and services that enhance the quality of life for residents. Additionally, development should include a variety of restaurants and community gathering places for residents to meet and socialize. The corridor needs to become a place for people to spend money directly in the neighborhood they live in rather than take those dollars outside the area.

### Create Density Along the Corridor

Currently, the corridor has about a 64% vacancy rate. The community needs to create additional capacity and density so the strip is vibrant and people want to hang out. One way to accelerate development would be to devise a strategy for community ownership of property along the corridor. Community ownership of assets or at least site control would give residents the means to control the type of businesses launched in the area. The team identified several bus stops along the corridor. Thus, there is already a fair amount of traffic passing through the area. Increased density along with good lighting, regular street maintenance, and police presence will alleviate any concerns that residents may have over safety and may encourage commuters to stop and spend time in the area. All of the above needs to be accomplished in the context of a “complete neighborhood,” meaning everything is within a twenty-minute walk.

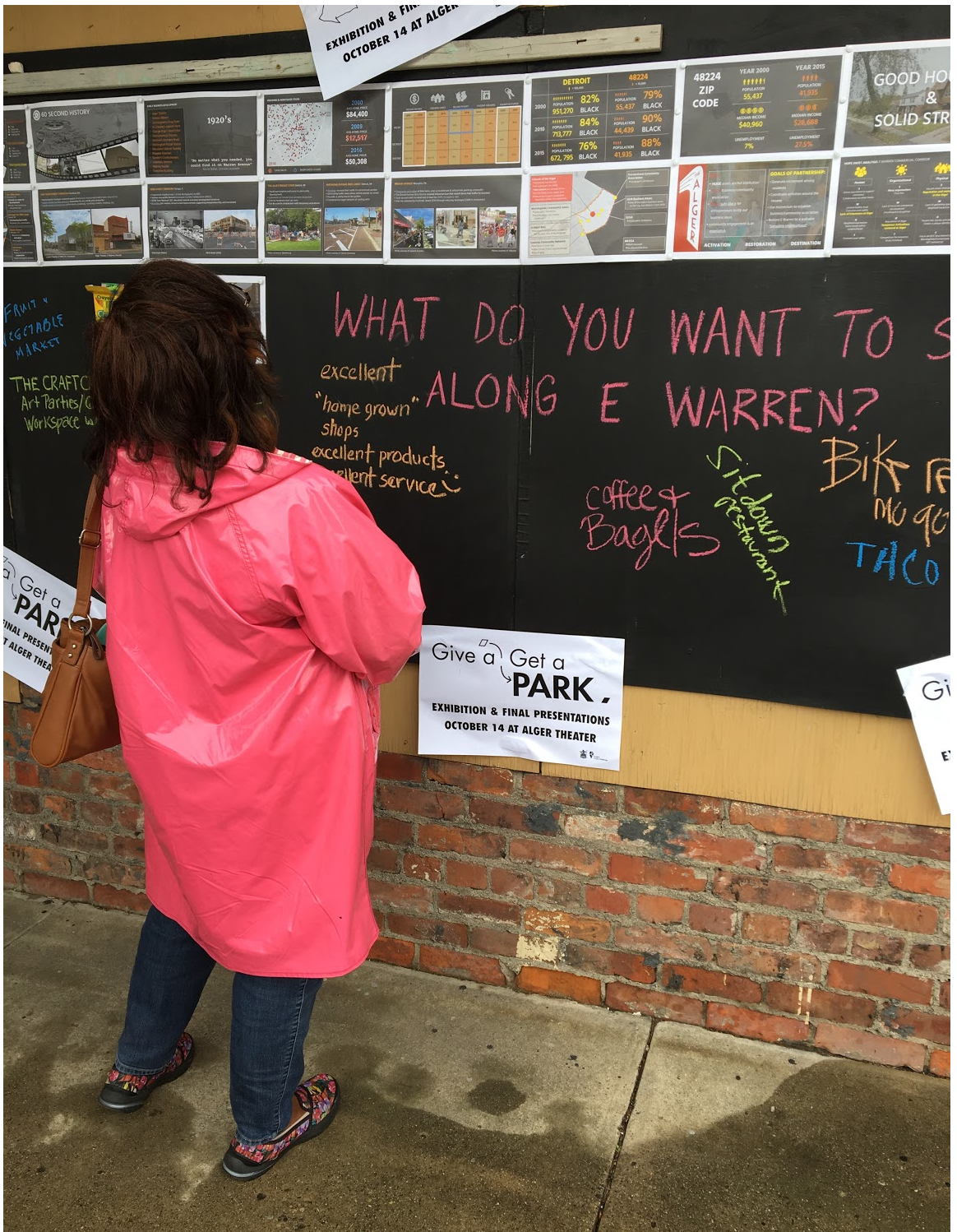
### Concentrate Initial Development Around the Alger Theater

Another need identified during the assessment of the commercial corridor is the necessity of concentrating initial redevelopment to create a noticeable improvement for residents. During interviews with stakeholders, most acknowledged the Alger Theater as a critical anchor for the community. Since the Alger is in the process of activating two commercial sites immediately adjacent to the theater, concentrating first on redevelopment around the Alger area is likely to draw attention from residents and new prospects for business development.

### Increase Foot Traffic to the Area

The commercial strip as it exists today is primarily a pass-through street with high-speed automobile traffic and limited biking. The team observed that most bikers split their time between riding in the designated shared traffic lane and riding on the sidewalks. This community needs a strategy to not only draw people to the area but to slow down the traffic and to make it more bike and pedestrian friendly. It would also benefit if the commercial corridor could be branded with a distinct community identity and outfitted







# EXISTING USES KEY

- Institutional
- Commercial I - Retail / Service
- Commercial II - Restaurant / Bar
- Residential
- Mixed Use Commercial Residential
- Vacant
- Public Parking



with an impactful method of wayfinding so that residents and visitors could more easily locate desirable destinations.

#### Use Temporary Activations to Create Excitement and Further Engage Residents

One effective method of demonstrating what is possible is the use of temporary activations to show residents and business owners what is possible. The expansive alleyway between the Alger and the Jefferson Library is one potential site, and since the Alger has site control, it would make it easier to implement activations at this location.

#### Create a Business and Community Association to Sustain Momentum

One overarching approach that could pull many of the needs identified together into a cohesive strategy would be to develop a sustainable business and community association to continue the progress and development of the corridor. Ideally, the business coalition could be housed within one of the existing organizations in the area and would support the continuing revitalization of the commercial corridor by sponsoring community programs, encouraging and building business relationships, and organizing networking meetings among business owners and residents. As stated earlier, this needs assessment will evolve as the Restorin' E. Warren team gathers additional information.

# SWOT/HOPE ANALYSIS



To better understand and organize the research gathered throughout the exploration process, The Restorin' E. Warren team conducted a SWOT Analysis organized along the elements of the HOPE Model. A SWOT Analysis is a framework for analyzing a community's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and risks that it faces. It helps to sharpen the focus on existing strengths, minimize potential threats, and take the highest possible advantage of possibilities available to a community. The team's SWOT analysis follows.

 <b>HUMAN</b>	<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
	Robust block captain leadership in the community	Declining population	Strong foundation for community leadership exists	Shift from ownership to renter could mean less invested residents
	Neighborhood density surrounding E. Warren corridor	Limited number of healthy food choices	Community interaction can be developed via vacant lot activation	Lack of perception of police presence could fuel crime
	High rate of resident longevity in neighborhood	Strong individual neighborhood identities may interfere with collaboration efforts	Existing commercial corridor contains some desirable destination stops.	City resources focused elsewhere
	Safety patrolling a high priority	Blighted homes and vacancies discourage walkable community	Ensuring blighted lots get cleaned may build community cohesiveness	Supply and variety of resources doesn't meet demand



**ORGANIZATIONAL**


	<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
	Many notable organizations in the community	Little coordination between orgs	MECCA could potentially house a business association	Competition for resources could interfere with coordinated, cohesive development strategy
	Surrounding area home to several schools and churches	Most existing non profits don't focus on commercial development	501c3 status can create potential funding sources	Pending election results could destabilize one of orgs.
	Alger Theater strong anchor institution	Potential community partners comprised entirely of volunteers	Focusing development on E. Warren would bridge neighborhoods	Lack of clarity as to where to house a community and business association
	The Friends of the Alger has site control which could aid in development	Pursuit of political leadership a distraction for one key organization	Improved connection between neighborhood orgs. can create synergies that better serve all	Potential lack of coordination between City and existing orgs.



**PHYSICAL**

	<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
	High potential retail space with strong bones	Most residential space above commercial property are vacant	Removing blight will make neighborhoods safer	Mismanagement of vacant homes could cause further neighborhood decline
	Alger commercial spaces currently under development	Lack of diversity of housing options	Cleared lots could be potential pocket parks	Primary attraction to EEV leaves less interest in Cornerstone and MorningSide
	High quality housing stock lines the business strip except W. MorningSide	Blighted and vacant properties along W. MorningSide	Potential to create a community identity	Proximity to Grosse Pointe's commercial corridor
	Located on major E/W transit route	Land ownership not concentrated with any one developer or owner	Community signage and streetscape improvements would create more walkability and community character	Bad actors among property owners makes activation more challenging



 <b>ECONOMIC</b>	<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
	Existing commercial corridors attract people to the area	Unemployment remains high	Recognition that the Alger is a huge catalyst for development	Alger facing challenges to get Theater approved as gathering place
	Neighborhoods located near several major employers with reliable transit options	Lack of small, localized employment opportunities	Develop area as an arts and entertainment center building on existing assets	Funding opportunities limited for non profits
	Relative to the City of Detroit, most resident's median income still above average	Vacant buildings will require capital to upgrade and activate	Community members taking ownership of vacant properties gives them a voice for development	Potential for City planning efforts for economic development to be different from what residents want.

Many of the elements identified in the analysis were a direct result of the Needs Assessment and Asset Mapping activities. They were based on direct observations and conversations with numerous stakeholders. By conducting this analysis early in the process, the team was able to keep all four pillars of the HOPE model in sharp focus as the project progressed. It also helped shape the emerging strategy that building on the strengths and opportunities in the neighborhoods, would likely lead to more lasting solutions than if we focused on weaknesses or threats. This proved especially true in the Human and Organizational categories.



## COMMUNITY PARTNER



With various Community Development Corporations close to East Warren, selecting a community partner to work alongside the team was not a simple decision. East English Village, Cornerstone, and MorningSide all have community associations. However, the desire to bridge all three neighborhoods through this capstone project prevented us from selecting one and allowed us to remain neutral in our pursuits for a better community as a whole. U-Snap-Bac was also a potential candidate. However, their focus on housing development was outside of our goals. Eastside Community Network and MECCA were two additional great organizations; however, they reside outside of the focus area or lack a physical location.

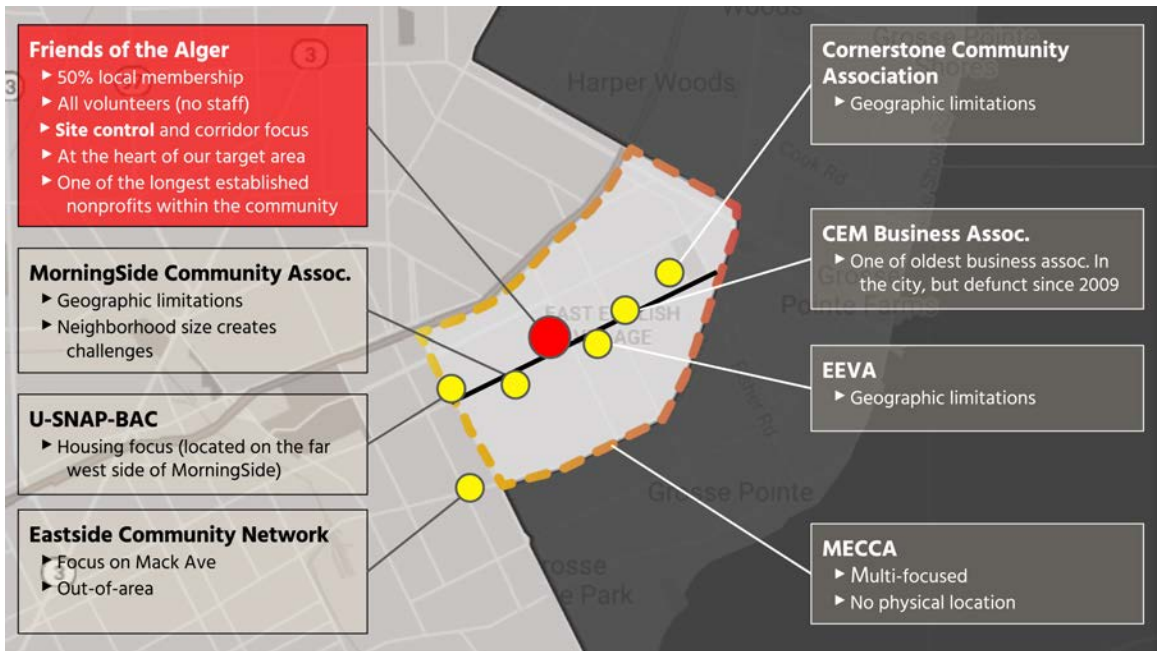
Still, there was one organization that continued to garner praise from many within the community. As Howard Brown, owner of Royalty Dance Studio, stated: “The Alger is the heartbeat of Warren.” As an anchor in the community, the Friends of the Alger Theater is one of the longest established non-profit organizations in the community. It is also at the center of our target area of study. Also, it has the key benefit of having site control. Its stated objective and focus towards the “activation, restoration, and destination,” of E. Warren as recited by its president, Helen Broughton, aligns with the team’s goals for this capstone project. By partnering with the Friends of the Alger and leveraging programming that they already have in place, like the monthly site tours, the team believes they can create a buzz around the theater and that development along the corridor can occur much quicker.

When examining the asset maps in **Appendix A**, it is evident that other than churches and parks, there is a high concentration of the different asset categories in the area immediately around the Alger. Many of the items identified in the needs assessment above were subsequently validated through the team’s primary community engagement tool - the interactive commercial corridor panorama. First, it is interesting to note that although residents had a 0.8-mile stretch on which to provide feedback, many of the suggestions were clustered around the theater, indicating the feeling of residents that the Alger is a critical catalyst for development along E. Warren. Second, the Alger Theater

Theater resides approximately in the center of the 0.8-mile study area, and residents from all three neighborhoods feel connected to it. Although situated on the edge of the MorningSide neighborhood, the theater is actively engaged with all three communities through programming like the Film on the Hill program at Balduck Park. During the summer months, the Alger provides free films and other entertainment for community members.



*E. Warren Commercial Corridor – 1937. Courtesy of Detroit Yes.*



Another significant affirmation from the panorama was the need for entertainment, culture and a variety of food choices. With the development in the commercial space at the Alger, potential businesses like Reilly's Creamery and the MorningSide Cafe will address these community needs and begin to provide concentrated retail density along E. Warren. Additionally, several residents commented on the importance of activating the theater so that they could once again show movies. Finally, the Alger Theater enjoys site control, which is an essential component of conducting community engagement activities. For all these reasons, the Restorin E. Warren Team believes the Friends of the Alger represents the most viable community partner.



# CASE STUDIES



The Case Studies selected by the Restorin' E. Warren team reflect different elements relevant to the development of the commercial corridor along E. Warren Avenue. Included in this section are the five most relevant studies of seven conducted, along with a brief analysis of how these projects relate to the 2017 Capstone Project. Each study has something unique to offer in consideration of development along the E. Warren commercial corridor.



## **MICHIGAN AVE BIKE LANES – DETROIT, MICHIGAN**

In many parts of the country, increasing bicycle and pedestrian activity has proven to be an effective strategy in driving patronage to commercial corridors. The metropolitan Detroit area is catching up with the rest of the country when it comes to making their roadways more biker friendly. The most impactful initiatives provide protected bike lanes that separate vehicle traffic by some form of physical barrier. These barriers often appear as cement planters; highway dividers; lightweight plastic bollards; or, in the case of Michigan Avenue, parked cars. In 2010, Michigan Avenue was earmarked for an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant to resurface a significant portion of the roadway. In 2016, began installing bike lanes on Michigan Avenue between Livernois and Cass. Before beginning the work, MDOT hosted several public community meetings. At these meetings, many residents insisted that any streetscape project on Michigan Avenue should include dedicated bike lanes for cyclists. In response to these recommendations, MDOT decided to reduce the roadway from three lanes in each direction to two lanes with a center lane for turns. This reconfiguration freed up enough road to construct a five-foot bike lane and a ten-foot parking lane. The bike lanes would be moved to the inside portion of the parking lane, protecting bikers from traffic utilizing parked cars. The entire area was also equipped with “Bike Lane Ahead” signage alerting drivers to be on the lookout for cyclists at each of the intersections.

This approach makes lots of sense for the commercial corridor along E. Warren. It is



*Courtesy of Detroit News.*



one strategy that can drive more traffic to the business corridor. It could be a connector route as part of a more extensive bike trail network that connects Chandler Park to the west with Balduck Park on the east edge of the study area. Reducing one lane of travel along Warren Avenue would also slow automobile traffic that currently traverses the neighborhood at a high rate of speed.

### **EAST 185<sup>th</sup> STREET CORRIDOR – CLEVELAND, OHIO**

Collinwood, Cleveland, and more specifically East 185th St., is very similar to the team’s area of study which makes this an ideal case study for this Capstone project. It is fifteen minutes from downtown Cleveland, near a major interstate and shoreline and is home to the historic LaSalle Theater. Faced with vacancy and blight after racial tensions and “white flight,” it is also a prime candidate for revitalization.

In recent years, the Waterloo Arts District, six minutes from East 185th Street, has seen revitalization and has become a catalyst for improvement in the area. After receiving 5.5 million dollars for streetscape improvements, the district saw an influx of new business ranging from art studios and galleries to restaurants and bakeries. When the plan was expanded to include redevelopment along East 185th Street, all eyes turned towards the 4.1 million dollar renovation of the historic LaSalle Theater that was scheduled to begin in late

#### **EAST 185TH STREET CORRIDOR** Cleveland, OH

- ▶ Revitalization strategies centered around [streetscape improvements](#) and [theater renovations](#)
- ▶ [LaSalle theater building audience](#): destination for arts, media and community
- ▶ [LaSalle theater programming](#): performances, weddings, recordings, exhibits, meetings, etc.



LaSalle Theater, E 185th St, Cleveland



Alger Theater, E Warren, Detroit

*Courtesy of Northeast Shores CDC.*

2016. The facility will be transformed into an arts, media and community center and will accommodate programming for performance, weddings, performing arts rehearsals, recording space, exhibit hall and meeting space for businesses and community organizations. There will also be renovations to the storefront properties and apartments on the second level flanking the theater on both sides.

East Warren could benefit from some of these same goals and improvements. Similar to the LaSalle Theater's center of gravity approach, the team believes the same could be true for the Alger Theater. Its renovation along with streetscape improvements would be the business and pedestrian attraction that East Warren needs.

### **BROAD AVENUE – MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE**

In 2006 a group of residents in the city of Memphis began planning an arts and community district in the city's Binghamton neighborhood along a long-abandoned section of retail corridor that had been cut off by a highway planned fifty years earlier. For four years they continued preparing and rehabbing buildings but felt the area needed a reason for people to come to the corridor so that it could thrive and evolve. By 2010 they had decided that neighborhood needed to be planned for cyclist and pedestrians first and had worked with local government to create a two-way protected cycle track called the Hampline.

Broad Avenue employed a strategy of temporary activations and block building activities to inspire residents to rethink what the area could eventually become. The newly formed Broad Avenue Arts Alliance called their project, A New Face for An Old Broad. They began the process with an active community engagement plan that involved residents at every step of the planning process. They put out a call for donations of paint, rollers, artists, skilled artisans, brooms, and shovels, and extended an invitation to three neighborhood schools to adopt a crosswalk that their students would design and paint. During the several weeks leading up to the event, the alliance worked with area business owners and volunteer, encouraging them to open up storefronts and activate pop-up shops and restaurants. Most importantly though, they reinvented the public space on the street to illustrate how better infrastructure can breathe life into a commercial district. With a focus on bicyclists and pedestrians, the area underwent a remarkable transformation by merely adding benches, streetlights, trees, and bike racks. For a modest investment in supplies and a lot of donated time, energy, and supplies from people who shared the vision, Broad Avenue enjoyed a remarkable transformation. 15,000 people frequented Broad Avenue that weekend and had a great time exploring the new Broad. Seven years later this project has leveraged more than \$25 million for the arts district and surrounding Binghamton neighborhood. New businesses have moved in, and existing businesses have expanded.



*Courtesy of chose901.com*

The most important takeaways from this project that apply to East Warren are:

- ▶ The entire community was engaged and donated over \$70 thousand in gap funding for the Hampline on ioby.org.
- ▶ They made room for community space that could drive foot traffic such as the Pavilion with fitness classes, crosswalks and the Hampline cycle track putting pedestrians first.
- ▶ Businesses expanded and new enterprises moved in.
- ▶ It has become a community-wide destination after being neglected for over fifty years.

### **63<sup>rd</sup> STREET - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

The city of Chicago partnered with neighborhood groups and a non-profit organization to revitalize a once thriving corridor in Chicago. The revitalization, occurring over the course of 10 years, was made possible through \$50 million in loans arranged through a collaboration between Greater Auburn-Gresham Development, Southwest Organizing Project, Teamwork Englewood, and LISC Chicago. These organizations came together to form Southwest Corridor Collaborative (SWCC) and employed a targeted



*Courtesy of Crain's Chicago Business.*

people and place-based approach to economic development. SWCC will approach neighborhood led economic development planning, implementation, and investments guided by the following priorities: Job creation, infrastructure improvement, connecting residents to jobs, supporting entrepreneurship, and investment (Harte).

63rd Street shares similarities with East Warren. The Restorin' E. Warren team believes that a similar revitalization project could be implemented to invigorate East Warren Avenue in the MorningSide neighborhood. According to Crain's Chicago Business, 63rd Street was once the city's second busiest retail corridor, second only to downtown. E. Warren in MorningSide -Detroit was once a thriving retail district as well. Organizations in MorningSide, East English Village, and Cornerstone Village such as Friends of Alger Theater, U-Snap-Bac, MECCA and existing community organizations in each of the neighborhoods could come together to forge partnerships with larger organizations such as LISC and the Kresge Foundation to fund economic development initiatives.

### **STATION NORTH – BALTIMORE, MARYLAND**

The Station North Arts and Entertainment District (SNAED) in Central Baltimore lies just north of Penn Station, Baltimore's primary transportation hub. During recent decades, the area was marked by decay and blight and had suffered from high vacancy rates with many empty lots and abandoned buildings spread throughout the district. The gradual deterioration of this area accelerated when the area became isolated from the rest of the city after the completion of the Jones Fall Expressway, a major connector route between downtown Baltimore to the northern suburbs.

In 2002, Maryland officially established SNAED as an arts and entertainment district. The Station North area cuts across three neighborhoods: Charles North, Barclay, and Greenmount West. A coalition of four non-profit art organizations banded together to develop and implement public art programs and exhibitions in different indoor and outdoor

sites, with more added all the time. As the district expanded, SNAED became home to fourteen arts and entertainment sites as well as several DIY venues.

The coalition understood the social and economic challenges facing the community, and that many residents lacked essential needs and services. Also, there was a growing realization that the area would benefit by establishing a more vibrant and unique identity. One of the coalition’s initial strategies was the use of temporary activations. They planned a series of short-term events and more permanent public to bring new life to empty spaces and lots.

Although nearby Penn Station is a source of high volumes of traffic to the area, these visitors tend to be passersby on their way to another destination. One of the earliest goals of this initiative was to encourage commuters who are using the nearby transit hubs to leave the station and check out the district. To entice passengers to spend time in the area, organizers proposed a wide variety of programs, presentations, and special events. Second, organizers also wanted to ensure that the district’s local artists and DIY community got included in programming decisions. Finally, a third stated objective was to connect with residents of the area—by offering a variety of free events and programs. The entire project far exceeded everyone’s expectations and garnered local and national attention as an urban success story. This venture remains a successful endeavor today and has led the Baltimore Chamber of Commerce to designate the district as a “must-see” in the city of Baltimore. Another feature of Station North is the Tool Library which is a community hub and tool-lending library located in the community. The library boasts over 2,000 tools and sponsors over twenty-five different classes. It also houses a public woodworking shop.

The Station North experience has potential elements that could inform the Capstone project. First, the E. Warren commercial strip under study is similar to what was



*Courtesy of instituteccd.org.*

occurring when the Station North redevelopment began. Both are/were marked with high vacancy and abandoned buildings along the commercial corridor. Second, the E. Warren strip is an active transit route with numerous bus stops. Like Station North, the object should be to give commuters a reason to get off the bus and spend time in the area. Third, it appears that the first temporary activations in the SNEAD concentrated on a small strip of N Charles Street, similar in size to proposed focus area on E. Warren. Finally, with the Alger Theater at the center of the E. Warren study area, it could be leveraged to attract other arts and entertainment elements to the neighborhood.

# PROJECT DETAILS



## **ACTION PROPOSAL**

The project objective is to create the framework for a revitalization strategy to invigorate business along E. Warren Avenue, between Bedford Road and Guilford Street, by leveraging the attention and resources of the Alger Theater and partners, to encourage foot traffic to the corridor and by attracting families and individuals of the surrounding neighborhoods. This work will be carried out by the business and community association that was established in November 2017. The ultimate goal is to bring 100% business occupancy to the corridor by 2022. The team identified specific action recommendations to address the revitalization of the commercial corridor.

- ▶ Pop-Up Business Activations
- ▶ Strategies to Increase Foot Traffic to Area Businesses
- ▶ Monthly or Bi-monthly Block Builds
- ▶ Engage the Community in the Development Process
- ▶ Get Residents Connected to the Alger Theater on a Personal Level
- ▶ Establish a Business & Community Association

The team also identified several longer-term goals and action proposals. Considerations for 2018 and beyond include:

- ▶ Create an Eastside Tool Library and Woodshop
- ▶ Create a Commercial Real Estate Investment Cooperative
- ▶ Create Greenway Loop Between Balduck and Chandler, Including E. Warren
- ▶ Secure Space for New Enterprises to Test Their Ideas Before Launch

## **EXPECTED PROJECT OUTCOMES**

The HOPE model and SWOT analysis ensure a multidisciplinary focus that is holistic and synergistic. This focus ensures that development goes beyond the traditional emphasis on physical and economic development and includes the impact on residents and





neighborhood organizations. If the project were to be fully implemented, the Restorin' E. Warren team would expect several significant outcomes in each area of HOPE. It would also address social justice issues and have a positive impact on regional development. Each of these results is further discussed below.

First, concerning human development, the team would expect that as new businesses come into the area that these enterprises would better match up with what residents need and want. Second, once a community and business association becomes active, the team expects that residents will have more say in decisions that will impact them, and will be more inclined to patronize the businesses in their local community. The formation of an active association is also the principal strategy to ensure that the work of the Capstone project is carried forward beyond the scope of the project. Third, the team would expect to see better activity programming that is age specific and provides more excellent connectivity and sense of community for residents of all ages.

In the area of organizational development, the most impactful outcome would be the formation and growth of a robust community and business association. Rather than try to identify a natural home for this group within an existing organization, the team believes this is a decision best left up to the association itself. The Restorin E. Warren team also believes that impactful and visible commercial development along the corridor will inspire the various organizations located within the three neighborhoods to coordinate and collaborate much closer.

As it relates to physical development, the best outcome would be increased density of a variety of businesses along the commercial corridor, and to ultimately achieve one hundred percent occupancy by 2022. A higher concentration of retail establishments would provide a foundation to make this area safer and more of a "complete neighborhood." Another important outcome would be improved streetscape and business facades along the entire strip that would encourage patronage from a more extensive consumer base beyond just the residents of the area.

Lastly, in the area of economic development, the team believes that if implemented, this project will have a lasting economic impact on the entire area. We would expect to see the market value of residential and commercial properties improve significantly.

One consideration worth mentioning is the potential impact of this project on social justice issues facing residents of these communities. Currently, residents do not have many of their basic needs met within the neighborhood. For example, there are limited healthy food or restaurant choices that provide healthy options for dining. Lacking basic needs, residents must then travel outside of the area to meet these requirements. Once the business corridor is reinvigorated, many of these necessities will be met closer to home,

which, in turn, would make the area much more inclusive and be welcoming to everyone regardless of race, age, or other attributes.

The Restorin' E. Warren team has also identified two primary constraints that will impact the proposed project. The most prominent limitation is time. The commercial corridor did not deteriorate overnight, and it will take several years to reinvigorate the businesses along the strip. There has not been an active business association in the area for about ten years, and the team believes that once it gets established, it will accelerate the process of reactivation. Another project constraint is money. There have to be funding sources identified that allow community members to take control of vacant properties and become the developer of last resort. One approach that is worthy of further exploration is the possible establishment of a community cooperative that allows stakeholders to invest small amounts that are then pooled to purchase strategic properties along the corridor.

### **ANALYSIS ON ACTION PROPOSALS**

Although all have high potential to contribute to the restoration and activation of E. Warren, these actions vary significantly regarding resource requirements and timelines. Each of the above mentioned action steps is described below. Action steps were continuously updated throughout the planning process up to the time of the October 14 event.

#### Pop-up Business Activations

The team believed that this was an essential early step to build momentum and originally planned the first temporary activation for Saturday, September 16, 2017. After consultation with our community partner, we adjusted this date to October 14, 2017, to more widely advertise the event. The team selected the area around the Alger Theater and the Jefferson Branch Library as the perfect location. The goal of the pop-up activation is to create a gathering event where community members can connect with local restaurants and business owners who will be invited to feature their products. Also, there were scheduled activities including Yoga, Hustle Classes, and Zumba.

#### Increase Foot Traffic to Area Businesses

The team believes it is essential to attract residents to the commercial corridor by increasing foot traffic. Conducting additional temporary activations is one way to accomplish this. There is already lots of curiosity around the development at the Alger. The activation of the rooftop patio is another potential asset to draw in residents. It is slated to open in late summer, 2017.



### Monthly or Bi-Monthly Block Builds to Engage Residents and Business Owners

Everyone wants to see East Warren become a more walkable vibrant community and not everyone wants to engage by going to a community meeting. Many people just want to be hands-on and show that activation is happening and care little about the logistics. Better Block, a design and activation firm out of Dallas, TX has coined the term "Block Build" as a way for communities to come together in a 48 hour period and transform a commercial corridor, adding bike lanes, colorful walkways, planter boxes, and even pop up cafes and community seating. This concept can have legs as an ongoing community engagement tool and as a first step towards a tool library on East Warren. Not only can this be used to engage local business but also ensure that residents have a stake in what is happening on East Warren and feel ownership over the process. If residents have ownership over the process, they will be more in the know about what local businesses are on East Warren and be more engaged in the community.

### Establishing a Business & Community Association

The commercial corridor has not had an active business association for the last nine years. One of the desired outcomes of this project is to get one started and then develop a strategy to sustain the effort. After discussions with District Manager Letty Azar, the idea has been expanded to consider a combination business and community association to more closely link the needs of the community with any potential development along Warren Avenue. One challenge to this initiative is the reluctance of various neighborhood groups to work across their boundaries. For this effort to succeed, members of all three communities will need to come together.

### Connect More Residents to the Alger Theater on a Personal Level

The Friends of the Alger Theater is an organization that has always tried to cater to all three neighborhoods and is continuously trying to understand what the community needs and wants. There are challenges in activating this space. First, the building has been closed for many years and only recently has undergone noticeable development. Second, the theater operates with no full-time staff and a 100% volunteer board. These challenges make it difficult to enlist volunteers. The best way to engage the community is by having the doors opened and events occurring around the Alger and by going door to door in the neighborhood to make sure residents know what is going on.

### Establish Detroit's First Community Tool Library, Woodshop and DIY Center

In cities across the country tool libraries are being created all over the country. The DIY Detroit Center on East Warren can serve multiple functions - most importantly as a tool library where tools are rented to residents to complete projects, as well as a training center

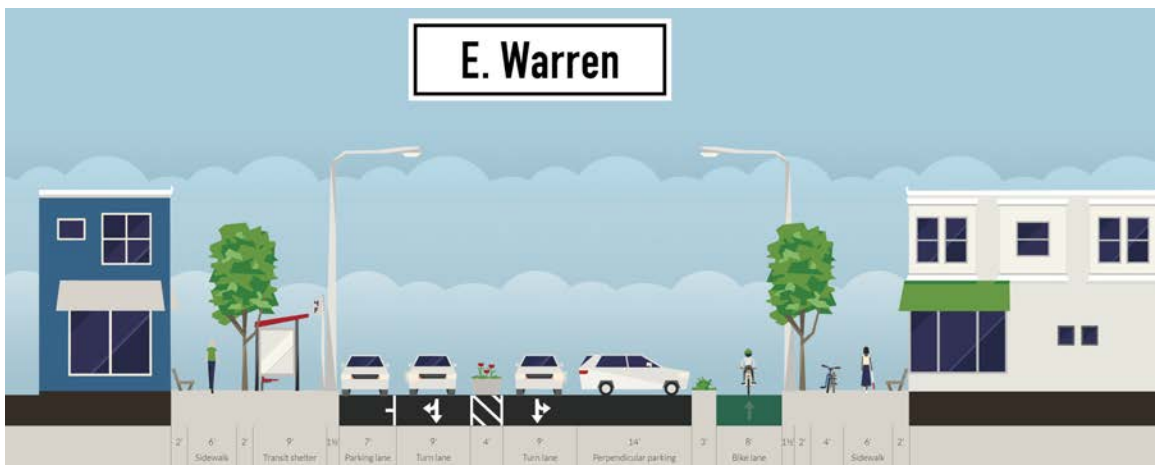
where organizations like the Michigan Historic Preservation Network and Brick and beam can teach classes to residents. Beyond these functions, this space will have open shop hours where people can create projects and hone skills so that they can start businesses. Products produced can be sold in the front of the center. Vetting and creation of local skilled tradespeople who can help improve homes in the area. During the summer, it could provide youth employment for minor home repairs to seniors unable to do it for themselves. Lastly, monthly block builds to help enhance the commercial corridor and contribute to creating a bond between business and community.

### Create a Commercial Real Estate Investment Cooperative

Many in the community have expressed interest in working with the commercial corridor to build community wealth. This goal could get accomplished by creating a real estate investment cooperative that would be a mechanism in which area residents could invest in the cooperative to buy local properties and redevelop them. By actually owning the commercial space, the community could use the site control to make sure the businesses that ultimately establish themselves are businesses that cater to the needs of residents. The ultimate goal is that the revenue captured from the projects goes back to those local investors to build community wealth.

### Create Greenway Loop Between Balduck and Chandler, Including E. Warren

Creating connectivity, driving foot traffic, reducing speed on E. Warren and creating a destination: these are the four primary functions that new bike infrastructure in the community can serve. Morningside, East English Village, and Cornerstone sit between two



*Courtesy of streetmix.com*



of Detroit's regional parks Chandler Park to the west, and Balduck Park to the East. These parks can serve as anchors for a green loop that would travel East and West along Chandler Park Drive and East Warren. On East Warren a protected bike lane with bollards could reduce speeds, help pedestrians feel more comfortable walking and brings foot traffic in front of East Warren businesses.

On Chandler Park and East Outer Drive, the recreational trail could go down the central boulevard changing it from passive to active recreational space. Currently, beyond the two regional parks, there is a lack of recreational parks in the neighborhoods. The proposed linear parks could help rectify this and make recreation much more accessible.

Once completed, the entire loop would be roughly seven miles. Canyon and Dickerson and Outer Drive would all provide north-south access points for the community to connect to the primary east-west connections.

### Establish Space for New Enterprises to Test Business Ideas before Launch

The goal of this would be a space where neighborhood residents can test out their business ideas, fine-tune products and connect with resources needed to be able to scale so that they can eventually own their brick and mortar space. This concept will help build density and make sure that we can uplift and support local entrepreneurs from the community. This approach would work in conjunction with the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation and the Detroit BizGrid to make sure these entrepreneurs receive the resources

needed to scale and develop concrete business plans and get the necessary funding to expand.

### **ACTION PLAN/IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

Our plan of action for implementation consists of proposals that engage both residents and business owners to create a unified effort towards favorable business and economic development on E. Warren. Although the key recommendations are longer term, the initial planning centered around one main event that took place on October 14<sup>th</sup>. The goal was to implement these activities at a scale compatible with our capacity but also to create momentum that attracts sustainable support from the community once the team concluded its work. The short term action/implementation plan related to the October 14th event appears as Appendix B. Beyond the short-term, the team also identified the key intermediate and longer-term recommendations. The following matrix includes detailed implementation guidelines for each key recommendation, roles of contributing parties/partners, project timeline with key milestones, conceptual project budget and possible sources of funding.

## ACTION PLAN/IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

	Key Recommendations	Detailed Implementation Guidelines	Roles of Contrib Parties/Partners
<b>Pop-up Business Activation</b>	Find spaces for daily and monthly pop-ups.	Determined by community.	Identify local hosts to discover local talent.
<b>Strategies to Increase Foot Traffic to Local Businesses</b>	Work with public sector to improve local infrastructure and increase walkability.	TBD by the City of Detroit.	Considering community planning purposes.
<b>Bi-Monthly Block Builds</b>	Identify neighborhood needs and test them out with temporary solutions.	TBD by the community.	Community participation DCDC.
<b>Establish Business &amp; Community Association</b>	Talk to all representative organizations and engage key stakeholders through existing orgs and those interested in started business in target area.	Establish an association with consistent monthly meetings scheduled.	Establish a temporary structure to determine permanent.
<b>Get Residents Connected to E. Warren on a Personal Level</b>	Increase programming along the corridor.	See attached activation guide.	TBD by the Business Association.
<b>Eastside Woodshop and Tool Library</b>	Identify a site for tool storage and maker space.	Gain site control, establish tool drive, host workshops, building out programming.	Structure TBD
<b>Real Estate Investment Cooperative</b>	For profit entity where community can invest into shares of a building/project.	Step 1: Establish if entity is run by community or identify a fiduciary; Step 2: Identify projects to invest in.	Structure TBD (consider investors and legal necessary).
<b>Recreational Trail</b>	Reaffirm the pathway with the city and county to increase neighborhood walkability and establish community support.	Partnership with the city and county, possibly part of street scape improvements	Partner with MOC Greenways Coalition entities. City and partners.
<b>Engage the Community in the Development Process</b>	Refer to Business and Community Association.		



Outing	Timeline and Key Milestones	Conceptual Project Budget	Funding
s to attract and ent.	50% business occupancy by 2019; 65% by 2019; 75% by 2021; 100% by end of year 2022.	TBD.	Equity, crowdfunding, grants, foundations, in-kind donations, volunteer support.
community input for all s.	1st year- planning; years 2-to-5- implementation; project completion- end of year 5.	TBD by the City of Detroit.	Public funding.
icipation, UDM,	On-going.	Ranges from \$500-\$10,000 per build.	Equity, crowdfunding, grants, foundations, in-kind donations, volunteer support.
orary advisory board nant structure.	Identify committed members, establish an advisory board, establish a meeting schedule, establish goals and strategies (bylaws) of the association.	TBD.	Equity, crowdfunding, grants, foundations, in-kind donations, volunteer support.
ess & Community	Immediate.	TBD on an as-needed basis.	Public/private.
	2018- gain site control (may be temporary); mid-2018- community tool drive, July 2018- host workshops, rehabilitate building if necessary or identify a permamnent location; on-going- build out programming.	\$50,000-\$100,000.	Equity, donations, public/private.
ommunity = al advice will be	Early 2018 Research and develop a structure. Late 2018 -2019 investment	Varies per project.	Local lenders, CDFIs, MCR, legal/financial assistance as needed.
O, Biketech, Detroit tion, and other County to be key	Integreate local bike programs and partner with Bike Tech.	TBD by the City of Detroit, and county.	TBD.

## PROJECT ASSESSMENT METHODS

The Restorin' E. Warren team has established the following criteria and methods as indicators of success. If the project were to be fully implemented, it would impact the site, circumstances and community partner in substantial ways.

### Project Goal Elements

#### 1. **Ongoing pop-up business activations.**

**Methodology:** Periodically (quarterly) measure the number of business pop-ups and, character and accessibility of business pop-up request forms received. **Long Term:** identify permanent space to be utilized for temporary business activations.

#### 2. **Increasing Foot traffic to businesses.**

**Methodology:** Based on the community expenditure survey, determine the potential expenditures to recapture in the area. Identify and monitor programming activities that drive traffic to existing business including the creation of a recreational trail between Balduck and Chandler Park Drive.

#### 3. **Block builds.**

**Methodology:** Periodically (quarterly) measure the block build activities either done in conjunction with temporary activations or as stand-alone community engagement activities. **Long Term:** Establish an Eastside Tool Library and Woodshop.

#### 4. **Engage Community in Development Process**

**Methodology:** Continue to measure engagements at various events, community meetings, etc. Send out regular news blasts on social media and measure comments, likes, feedback. Monitor hits on facebook group site. Monitor funds collected from loby crowdsourcing campaign. Periodically refresh photographs of the commercial corridor as improvements occur. Monitor feedback from community members to determine if needs assessment is in sync with what community members want East Warren. EEV Newsletter, FB, Nextdoor, Website, Friends of the Alger FB, Community Events, Door to Door.

#### 5. **Get residents connected to Alger Theater**

**Methodology:** Assist in the activation the retail space and use it as a means of communicating progress to the ongoing renovations at the Alger.

## **6. Establish a business/community association**

**Methodology:** Measure the number of business owners who join and are active. Monitor the number of meetings held each quarter. Establish some early, visible wins to generate excitement in the neighborhood. Ultimately, let the community determine a permanent organization to sponsor/host the association. Measure cohesiveness and collaboration between neighborhood groups. **Long Term:** Create a commercial real estate Investment Cooperative.

## **7. Enhance the Business Support Website**

**Methodology:** Measure the number of properties added to the inventory of commercial properties. Identify and provide connections with funding resources such as façade improvement grants, motor city match, Detroit BizGrid, etc. Measure property values along the corridor to see if development leads to ROI for business owners. This information is suggested to be used by a development entity to be determined by the community.

## **8. Publication and dissemination of Corridor Activation Guide**

**Methodology:** Track business owners who utilized the guide and accessed business support services.

## **9. Assessing the quality of existing and potential business and property owners.**

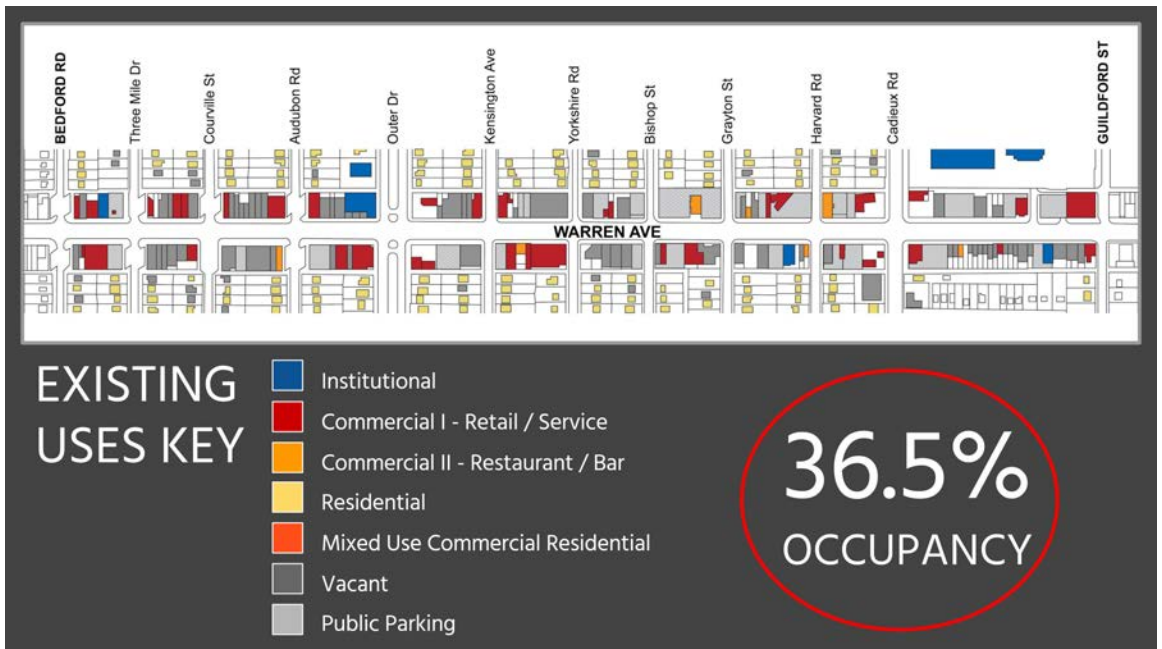
**Methodology:** Monitor commercial properties to support local businesses and rectify conditions that have led to vacant and dilapidated properties, including those sold, foreclosed, leased, activated, deactivated, developed, vacant, and underutilized.

## **10. Ultimate goal to Increase commercial occupancy to 100% by 2022.**

**Methodology:** Periodically measure the number of newly activated businesses. Establish interim goals and measure so that incremental progress can be noted and celebrated.

## **OUTCOMES AND NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Restorin' E. Warren team made significant planning progress through conversations and meetings with residents, business owners, and stakeholders of the E. Warren Ave commercial corridor community. Many of these accomplishments aligned with the action plan devised early on, while others occurred on an as needed basis concerning current events, happenings or desires of the three neighborhoods. Discussion of these noteworthy accomplishments follows.



### Familiarization with the Area

Early on in the planning process, the team familiarized itself with the buildings along the corridor, focusing on the commercial space between Bedford Road and Guilford Street. They conducted many walking tours and engaged in dialogue with existing business owners. Next, the team photographed and compiled an exhaustive inventory of all of the properties along E. Warren to determine ownership, tax status, occupancy status, condition, and listing price for each site. This information was later featured as one of the elements of the [Restorinewarren.com](http://Restorinewarren.com) website, providing interested community stakeholders with easier access to information on these properties. A copy of the inventory appears as **Appendix C**.

### Engagement with Prospective Business Owners

Another outcome of the project was developing a process to engage with local entrepreneurs interested in business along the corridor. The team developed an online form where existing and prospective merchants could express an interest in attending pop up events in the neighborhood. A copy of the form appears as **Appendix D**. This tool got added to the website, and local entrepreneurs immediately began responding. Within a week of the initial launch, eleven merchants requested pop up space ranging from a few hours to several months in duration. About half expressed an interest in permanent business space.

## Development of Effective Community Engagement Tools

Throughout the engagement process, the team consistently encouraged more dialogue between neighborhoods. There is a tendency in this area to be very neighborhood-centric. In all of its many interactions with the community, the team has stressed the importance of focusing less on their neighborhoods and more on the development of the entire E. Warren commercial corridor as a common rallying focus. Although this remains a challenge, the communities of MorningSide, East English Village, and Cornerstone Village are beginning to realize that they have similar needs and desires and that they can achieve more progress by pooling local resources together.

One of the featured community engagement events conducted by the team was a temporary activation that occurred on October 14th. The team developed an announcement flyer for the event which appears in **Appendix E**. This activity was scheduled to coincide with the monthly tours hosted by the Alger Theater. One of the objectives of the Alger event was to get residents connected to The Alger on a personal level and create foot traffic on E. Warren. The team invited several local businesses that had expressed an interest in pop-up space. The pop-ups included Alexis Wynn Adams from Holy Butter Soul Foods, Fritz Plaff from Citi TV, and Claudia Meeks who informed residents about the MEC Patrol and how community members could go about forming a neighborhood patrol. The team advertised free yoga and hustle dance classes to generate additional foot traffic to the area. The sessions took place in the lobby of the Alger and inside the public gathering space at the Jefferson Branch Library, and some residents participated in these events for the first time in their lives. Also, the team demonstrated several block building activities including painting a crosswalk to resemble a film strip, setting up a mini-patio in a parking space, constructing a bike rack out of recycled pallets, and furnishing games and activities including pumpkin bowling and a giant chess set. Pictures from the event appear in **Appendix F**.

The most prominent feature at the event was the interactive corridor display. The team constructed a twenty-six-foot-long frame and displayed a continuous panorama of the entire commercial strip between Bedford Road and Guilford Street. Residents and visitors were invited to pin sticky notes along the display, indicating what they knew about the property, what they would like to see in vacant spaces, and some even used the presentation to inquire about potential occupancy. Throughout the day, approximately 150 people attended the event, and 95 residents, business owners, and visitors participated in the interactive panorama. Representative post it note pictures appear in **Appendix G**.

## Establishment of Important Connections for the Neighborhood

Another outcome of this project was the leveraging of existing programs and partnerships through Motor City Match and Motor City Restore. Team members met with

Motor City Match grantees who will be occupying the storefronts adjacent to the Alger Theater, identifying their needs/wants as future business owners along E. Warren. They met with Jeffrey Lewis II with MorningSide Cafe and Chris Reilly with Reilly's Craft Creamery. They also promoted and attended a Motor City Restore informational session hosted by a local business- Royalty Dance Studio- with business owners interested in improving their storefront facades. A copy of the flyer for this event appears as **Appendix H**.

Throughout the process, the team continued to meet with high-stake investors interested in E. Warren. They conducted several conversations with members of the Detroit Planning & Development Department regarding event planning, commercial corridor and business growth, research and engagement processes. They also met with Detroit Community Development Funding Institutions (CDFI), and Foundations to learn about their criteria for investing in the 48224 zip code. Another noteworthy outcome for the team was connecting Invest Detroit representatives including Dave Blaszkiewicz, Mike Smith, Nate Barnes, and Maureen Anway with local community leaders, including the Friends of the Alger Theatre, the East English Village Corridor, and local business owners.

#### Creation of Restorin' E. Warren Website

The Restorin' E. Warren team also built and launched a website (<https://restorinewarren.com>) to help the community acquire the knowledge and tools needed to move this work forward and to ensure that everyone could gain access to available resources for businesses or residents interested in opening a new enterprise or learning more. In its current iteration, the website has seven core functions. These functions include a homepage that will alert visitors to upcoming meetings, events and serve as a community bulletin board. The Business Support page connects people to the Detroit BizGrid. According to their website, "The BizGrid is both an interactive online directory and a physical infographic designed to help entrepreneurs navigate the landscape of organizations providing business assistance in Detroit. If you've ever needed help exploring the city's many resources, you'll love the BizGrid!" (Detroit BizGrid). The Contact Form page is an easy way for individuals looking to get involved, ask a question about a property or connect to resources. The Current Businesses page is an interactive Google map that informs visitors of what businesses currently exist along the corridor, and when a site gets selected, the website provides the owner's contact information. The Neighborhood page assists visitors in understanding what is happening in the MorningSide, Cornerstone, and East English Village communities. This page connects people to either the website or Facebook page that residents use most frequently. The Why E. Warren? page builds the case for why opening a business on East Warren makes sense. Many points of data, maps, and infographics on why East Warren makes sense for retail, arts, and entertainment. The Prime Properties page contains property listings of buildings the Restorin' E. Warren team

has contacted and know the asking price or have their property listed for sale or lease. Sample screen shots from the website appear as **Appendix I**.

### Development of Commercial Corridor Activation Guide

The Restorin' E. Warren team wanted to make sure the momentum gained over the past eight months not only helps this commercial strip come back to life, but provides a model for corridors around the city come back to life through grassroots efforts. Key factors to this approach are community engagement, empowerment, and ownership over the process and how to get reacquainted with the commercial corridor. loby.org, a nonprofit crowdfunding platform that helps the community gain the funding and resources needed to implement projects successfully has agreed to partner on this guide to make sure it can be available in an open source manner across the country. The guide appears as **Appendix J**.

### Establishment of a Business & Community Association

Perhaps the most significant outcome of the project was the successful launch of the Business & Community Association on Nov 6th. After the "Alger in the Alley" Activation, there was a lot of momentum around seeing new businesses open on the corridor. Throughout the entire project, team members have continued strategizing about the most effective means of sustaining this capstone work after the project ends. Furthermore, the Restorin' E. Warren team wanted to make sure they could support businesses of all stages of development from idea to long-time existing businesses. The team hoped to highlight existing businesses, such as Ziggy's Open Pit Stop, Tiger Chung's Tae Kwon Do, Royalty Dance Studio, Rabaut's Cafe, and Detroit Diner. They also wanted to provide support for new businesses that want to open up by connecting them to programs such as Motor City Match, SWOT City, ProsperUS, and Build Institute. There are only 46 businesses currently open on the corridor, and many are not currently at a place they can participate in the business association, the community has to be involved to move this forward for engagement and planning can then happen at all levels. On November 6th, 2017, the business and community association hosted its first meeting with 34 people in attendance. A copy of the flyer from this event appears as **Appendix K**. There was a palpable energy in the room, as potential new businesses, building owners, existing business owners and residents discussed the critical role this newly established Association can play in supporting commercial development. They covered a variety of topics including how to better understanding property ownership on E. Warren, how to facilitate relationships with business incubators and secure funding for start-up operations, and strategized about finding space where residents can "pop up" temporarily to test a business concept. The group also decided to sponsor a pop-up holiday market as a visible sign of their newly



established identity. Nine residents and potential business leaders agreed to meet and plan the E. Warren Community Holiday Bazaar for December 16, 2017. At the conclusion of the meeting, the association decided to continue meeting on the first Monday of each month at the Jefferson Branch Library at 6 pm. The Association is poised to continue the work of Restorin' E. Warren and has recognized the work of the team in creating awareness and enthusiasm for the effort.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Throughout the entire capstone project, the Restorin' E. Warren team was very intentional in its community outreach efforts. Recognizing that this step in community development often gets shortchanged, we wanted to ensure that community voices were listened to at all stages of this project. When done well, engagement allows for better outcomes. From the beginning of the process, the team employed a variety of approaches to community engagement. Often times these approaches were informal and opportunistic. Other times they were more intentional and carefully planned out. Over the course of the project, the team engaged with 678 stakeholders. Each conversation added to the quality of the outcome.

During many of these conversations, often times residents would share thoughts about what they would like to see along E. Warren. The following is a list of additional recommended actions that will continue to bring improvements to this community and the commercial corridor, based primarily on feedback gathered during many of these conversations.

## Designated Resting Stops

Installing public seating along the commercial strip will improve the streets walkability by providing places of rest, whether to re-energize, eat, or wait for a friend. Simple resting places can increase the amount of time a shopper or resident will end up spend along the corridor.

## Improved Street Configurations

Narrower automobile lanes will slow down traffic and contribute to patrons stopping, staying, and shopping along the corridor. The commercial strip as it exists today is primarily a pass-through street with high- speed automobile traffic and limited biking. The team observed that most bikers split their time between riding in the designated shared traffic lane and riding on the sidewalks. This community needs a strategy to not only draw

people to the area but to slow down the traffic and to make it more bike and pedestrian friendly.

### Adopting a Main Street Model

Main Street models have successfully helped revitalize downtown and neighborhood commercial corridors around the country. This model is based on

MEETING TYPE	MONTH	# STAKEHOLDERS
Corridor walking tour	May	3
Resident meeting	May	1
Prayer group	June	3
Meeting with City of Detroit	June	1
Meeting with Friends of the Alger board members	July	3
July EEV Meeting	July	100
Local flyering for activation event	Sept	160
Meeting with Jefferson Branch Library librarian	Sept	1
Meeting #1 for Alger in the Alley	Sept	12
Motor City Restore @ Royalty Dance Studio	Sept	10
Pop Up Business Survey (completed forms)	Sept	10
EEV Commercial Committee meeting	Sept	6
EEV Commercial Committee meeting	Sept	3
Meeting #2 for Alger in the Alley	Oct	6
Meeting with City of Detroit	Oct	3
Meeting with Invest Detroit	Oct	10
Activation planning @ local businesses	Oct	2
Meeting with Motor City Match recipient	Oct	1
Resident meeting	Oct	2
Business owner meeting	Oct	1
Business owner meeting	Oct	1
Flyering for Motor City Restore	Oct	50
Alger in the Alley + temporary activation	Oct	150
November EEV Meeting	Nov	100
Restorin E Warren/Business & Community Association meeting	Nov	34
Meeting with neighborhood leadership	Nov	5
	<b>TOTAL ENGAGED</b>	<b>678</b>

transformation strategies for commercial corridors and uses four main areas of focus that are all rooted in transformation - Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization. The Restorin' E. Warren team recommends that as the organization grows, becoming a Michigan Main Street will be a logical step towards moving the needle to 100% business occupancy by 2022. Since it is a multi-year process, suggested start date for this is early 2018.

### Encouraging Community Ownership

One way to accelerate development would be to devise a strategy for community ownership of property along the corridor. Community ownership of assets or site control would give residents the means to control the type of businesses launched in the area.

### Improved Bus Stop Infrastructure

The team identified several bus stops along the corridor, most without available seating, limited lighting, and usually without adequate coverage. The current condition of the stops creates concerns about safety, accessibility, and comfortability as a public amenity.

### Increasing "Eyes on The Street"

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is the design, maintenance, and use of the built environment to enhance the quality of life and to reduce both the incidence and fear of crime. CPTED strategies include the use the bushes and other landscaping features as barriers as opposed to the use of fences. Also, increased density, better lighting, regular street maintenance, and police presence will alleviate any concerns that residents may have over safety and may encourage commuters to stop and spend time in the area. This density will increase the amount of "eyes on the streets" and thus improve the perception of safety. Project Green Light would be a tremendous additional tool in creating a safer neighborhood.

### Wayfinding

It would also benefit if the commercial corridor could be branded with a distinct community identity and outfitted with an impactful method of wayfinding so that residents and visitors could more easily locate desirable destinations.

### Concentrated Redevelopment

Another need identified during the assessment of the commercial corridor is the necessity of concentrating initial redevelopment to create a noticeable improvement for residents. During interviews with stakeholders, most acknowledged the Alger Theater as a

critical anchor for the community. Since the Alger is in the process of activating two commercial sites immediately adjacent to the theater, concentrating first redevelopment priorities around the Alger area is likely to draw attention from residents and new prospects for business development. One effective method of demonstrating what is possible is the use of temporary activations to show residents and business owners what is possible. The expansive alleyway between the Alger and the Jefferson Library is one potential site, and since the Alger has site control, it would make it easier to implement activations at this location.

### Increase Local Food Options

Food businesses in the area, mainly concentrated on Harper Ave., include a range from fast food restaurants to small grocers and neighborhood niche cafes. Though few, these businesses garner connection and communication as well as economic development within the community. Based on the feedback from the community, there is a great need for healthy food options ( farmer's market, or local gardens), family-friendly restaurants, unique restaurants to attract visitors, and an increase in fast food options for quick food choices.

### Local Business and Community Association

One overarching approach that could pull many of the needs identified together into a cohesive strategy would be to sustain business along the corridor through the control of the newly established Business and Community Association. This association would continue the progress and development along E. Warren with input from both corridor business and the community patronizing those businesses. Based on feedback from the November 6th meeting, the association would operate as a stand-alone entity rather than submitting to an existing organization in the community. Its function would be to support the continuing revitalization of the commercial corridor by sponsoring community programs, encouraging and building business relationships, providing resources to aspiring entrepreneurs and organizing networking meetings among business owners and residents.

### Transit-Oriented Development

The team also expects that this project would have a positive impact regionally through Transit-Oriented Development. Warren Avenue traverses the entire City of Detroit and beyond and has the potential to become a destination connector for the region. Destination connectors link communities with employment, medical, retail and educational campuses. E. Warren could potentially connect the neighborhoods of East English Village, Cornerstone and Morningside and Grosse Pointe to Midtown's DMC, commercial district and Wayne State's campus. According to Building Capacity, "Higher-density development is

more likely to occur along destination connector corridors due to increased market demand for locations with access to job and activity centers (44)". The restoration of E. Warren should be community driven as displayed throughout this Capstone project. With the help of preliminary research and the team's proposed action plan, E. Warren can become a thriving commercial corridor once again with the collaborative efforts of the E. Warren Business and Community Association, City of Detroit Planning and Development Department, DDOT, MDOT, Invest Detroit, DEGC, and other economic growth corporations.

### Improving Public policy

Finally, the team considered the influence of public policies and other external forces on the project. We believe that one opportunity would be to secure special zoning for this area to provide incentives for businesses to locate here. Also, the city could accelerate the impact of this project by merely holding property owners accountable. They should legislate and enforce ordinances that force absentee landlords to fix up their properties, occupy them, or sell them.

In summary, recommendations get enhanced when layered upon a formal evaluation of a community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Currently, the corridor has about a 64% vacancy rate. One way to accelerate development would be to devise a strategy for community ownership of property along the corridor. All of the above needs to be accomplished in the context of a "complete neighborhood," meaning everything is within a twenty-minute walk.



# CONCLUSION



The revitalization strategy created by the Restorin' E. Warren team has built momentum and enthusiasm among the residents of MorningSide, East English Village, and Cornerstone. A reinvigorated commercial corridor will ensure that the four pillars of the HOPE model become fully realized in this community. Leveraging the influence and support of the Alger Theater, the team has attracted new interest from a variety of stakeholders including city representatives, organizations, foundations, entrepreneurs, families and individuals.

Commercial Corridors have long been central to the disinvestment in the city, and over time the decline of neighborhood-based local economies in the city have helped accelerate the rate at which neighborhoods have declined. The Restorin' E. Warren team not only wanted to help revitalize E. Warren but also provide a framework for other communities around the city and the country that struggle with disinvestment. For many in the urban core of cities, when the formal economy has failed to provide opportunities for individuals the only option is to look towards the informal economy as the only opportunity for economic prosperity.

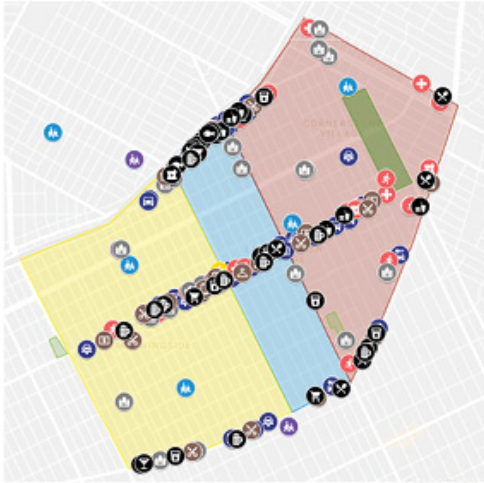
On a local level, E Warren is the artery of these three neighborhoods and can help spur the redevelopment of vacant properties throughout the corridor. It is important to note that the Restorin' E. Warren team believes that communities have all the resources to create a sustainable community from within the neighborhood, it's just a matter of connecting the dots and resources. Many studies look only at what a neighborhood needs, and what it can support. The Restorin' E. Warren team also wanted to focus on what entrepreneurs are currently in the neighborhood, and how best can the community support them to be successful. This community-driven business approach can lead to a much more fruitful and diverse neighborhood with its own local identity.

One of the most significant outcomes of this entire Capstone experience was the creation of a Business and Community Association that will sustain the work that the team has initiated, contributing to the social well being of community members and servicing the eastside of Detroit for generations to come. As stated, the ultimate goal is to see the E.

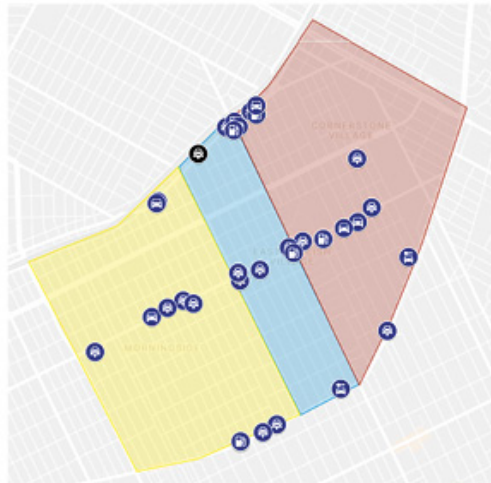
Warren corridor fully restored and occupied by 2022. The Restoring E. Warren team believes this capstone project will provide the catalyst to achieving this goal.



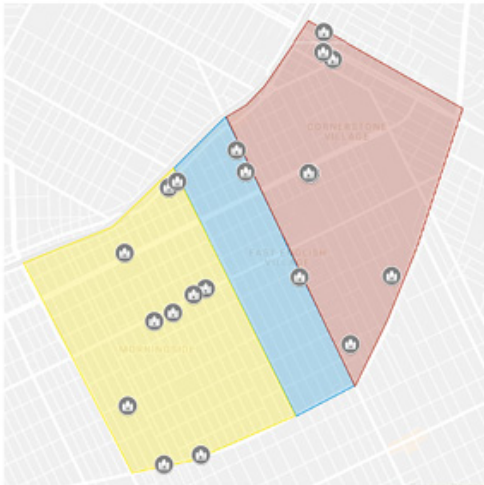
## APPENDIX A - ASSET MAPS



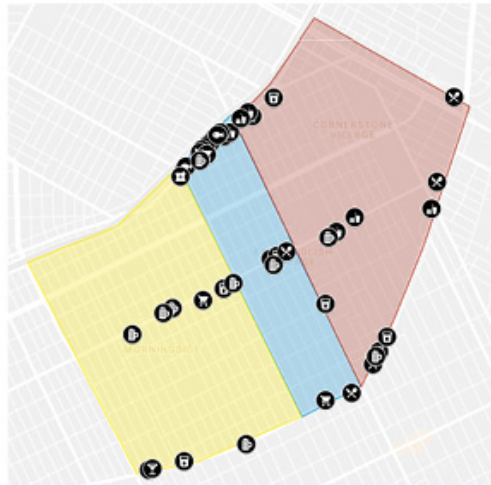
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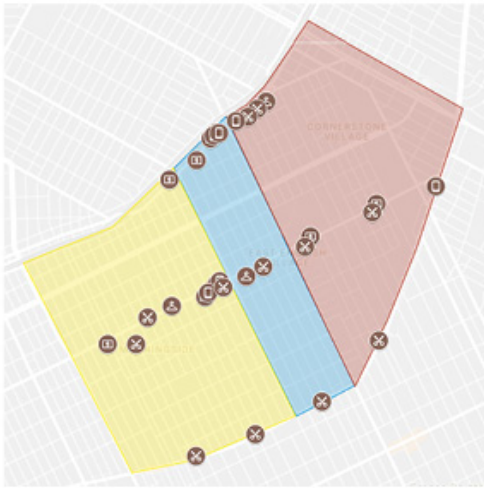
*Automotive assets.*



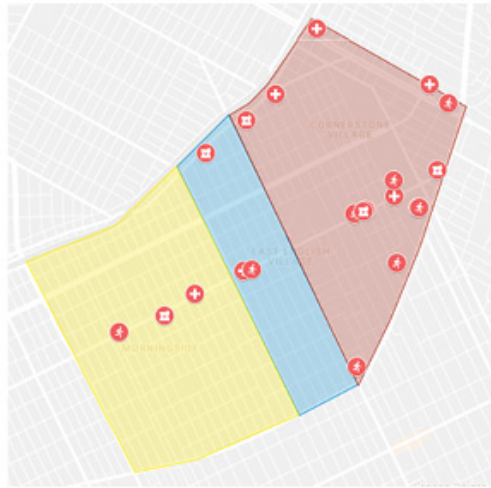
*Church assets.*



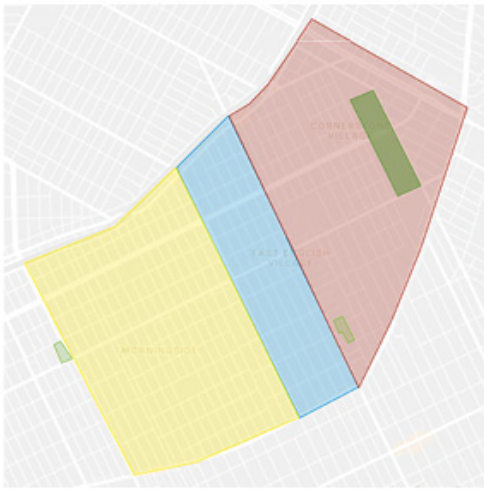
*Food assets.*



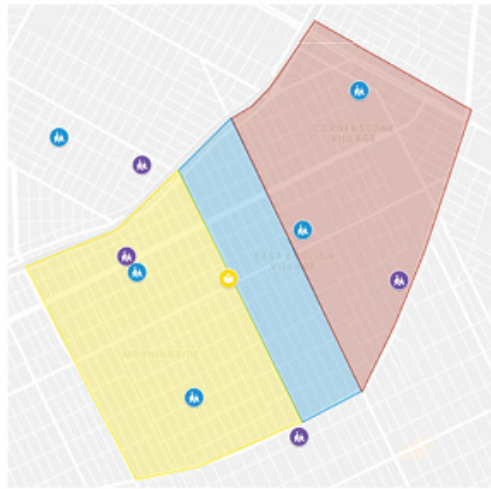
*Goods and service assets.*



*Medical assets.*



*Park assets.*



*School and library assets.*

## APPENDIX B - SHORT TERM ACTION PLAN/IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR OCTOBER 14TH EVENT

The following list details the short-term actions taken that were related to the October 14 event.

- A pop-up business activation on October 14<sup>th</sup> for existing and potential entrepreneurs to test their enterprise ideas.
  - Required planning meetings with Friends of the Alger and residents interested in helping with the event. *Two meetings were held on September 6 and October 2 to finalize the plans for the activation.*
  - Required an efficient mechanism to disseminate information. *The team created a Restorin' E. Warren Google Group on September 21. This group, along with Facebook proved to be effective ways to get the word out on the event. The team also created a webpage at [restorinewarren.com](http://restorinewarren.com) as an additional means of reaching residents and business owners.*
  - Required the creation of a registration form to distribute to individually selected entrepreneurs who could contribute and benefit from the event. *The pop-up business registration form was created on October 7. and disseminated widely. A total of nine new and existing businesses completed the questionnaire in the first week.*
  - Budget: \$15.00
  - Funding Sources: lobby crowd-funding campaign
- A simple block build that garners creativity and interaction on E. Warren and includes activities such as chalk paint stencils on the sidewalks and crosswalks, yard game assembly, and other activities that inspire E. Warren pride.
  - Required identifying the specific block build activities and securing them for the activation. *The team created sidewalk stencils of both the Alger Theater Logo and the Restorin' East Warren brand mark. Additionally, the team created a "parking place oasis" with Adirondack Chairs and potted plants. They also created a template to transform the walkway leading away from the theater into a film strip. Finally, the team constructed a bike rack out of recycled pallets. As word spread about the event, the Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation (**we need to make sure to thank them in our book**) loaned the team supplies to enhance the block build including a giant chess board, pumpkin bowling, chairs and footrests, and a croquet set.*
  - Budget: \$200.00
  - Funding Sources: lobby crowd-funding campaign

- Marketing and promotion to garner community participation and interest in the event. *Both hardcopy and electronic versions of an event flyer were created and disseminated through a variety of means. Electronically, the fliers got distributed through Facebook, Google Groups, and the newly created website. Notices also appeared in neighborhood newsletters. Additionally, the team distributed fliers door to door in the several blocks immediately surrounding the Alger Theater.*
  - Budget: \$20.00
  - Funding Sources: Ioby Crowd-Funding Campaign
- Programming activities to increase community engagement, drive foot traffic to the event and provide a unique experience for residents including a dance demonstration from Royalty Dance Studio as well as free hustle, and yoga classes for residents.
  - Required contacting Royalty Dance to secure their participation and confirm a location for the demonstration. *The owners of Royalty have been active and involved in many of discussions, especially early on. Regrettably, they had a schedule conflict on the day of the activation, so they were not able to participate. They did, however, indicate strong interest to participate in future events.*
  - Required identifying a hustle dance instructor to secure their participation and confirm a location for the demonstration. *The team was able to locate Baraka Johnson, founder of the Hustle with your Child program, to conduct a Hustle Class. Originally planned for classes to occur on the lawn of the Outer Drive boulevard, the session had to be moved indoors due to inclement weather and happened in the public gathering space at the library.*
    - Budget: \$50.00
    - Funding Sources: Ioby Crowd-Funding Campaign
  - Required identifying a yoga instructor to secure their participation and confirm a location for the demonstration. *The team was able to secure Jen Johnson, a certified yogini to conduct a yoga class on the day of the event. Originally planned to be conducted on the lawn of the Outer Drive boulevard, the class had to be moved indoors due to inclement weather and occurred in the lobby of the Alger Theater.*
    - Budget: \$50.00
    - Funding Sources: Ioby Crowd-Funding Campaign
- Interactive E. Warren corridor display for discussion and feedback from businesses and residents about the current business environment, and future wants/needs.

- Required determining the location and type of media for display. *Materials were purchased to build a twenty-six-foot frame to hold individual foam panels that stitched together a panorama of the entire commercial corridor. The team constructed the display and assembled it the day of the event along the side of the Theater.*
- Budget: \$65.00
- Funding Sources: Ioby Crowd-Funding Campaign

In total, the team spent approximately \$400.00 on the October 14th event at the Alger.



## APPENDIX D - POP UP BUSINESS ONLINE FORM

### Pop-up Business Form!!!

This form is meant to engage residents of Morningside, EEV and Cornerstone, that want to highlight their existing business or showcase a business concept along the East Warren Corridor in a pop-up format. (We are working with a few existing businesses on opportunities as those opportunities become more concrete we will be in touch.) For more information contact [resterinestuarren@gmail.com](mailto:resterinestuarren@gmail.com)

**\*Required**

**Email address \***

Your email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name? \***

Your answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Address? \***

Your answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone #?**

Your answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe your business?**

Your answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you a new or existing business?**

New

Existing

**How long are you looking to pop up?**

A few hours

A day


A week

A month

You want to open a permanent business on East Warren

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Send me a copy of my responses

I'm not a robot 

**SUBMIT**

**APPENDIX E - FLYER FOR ALGER EVENT**

# ALGER IN THE ALLEY

**9:00AM**  
Yoga Class  
**10:00 AM**  
Hustle Class  
**11:00AM**  
Theater Tour  
**11:30AM**  
Zumba Class

Activation, Restoration, Destination

**OCTOBER 14TH**  
**9AM TO 1PM**

**Business Pop Ups**  
**Coffee**  
**Yard Games**

For more information: [Restorineastwarren@gmail.com](mailto:Restorineastwarren@gmail.com)

313-575-7014



## APPENDIX F - PHOTOGRAPHS FROM ALGER IN THE ALLEY EVENT



*Adaptive reuse - pallet bike rack.*



*Pre-event preparation.*



*Film strip crosswalk.*



*Giant chess and business pop-ups.*



*Yoga at the theater.*



*Community engagement activity.*



# APPENDIX G - PICTURE COLLECTION OF POST IT NOTES FROM PANORAMA



International Food  
Fresh Market  
(w/ Former  
Lebanese  
Bakery  
grocery)  
↓

Want to buy  
and reopen  
WIMYS.  
Patrick  
[redacted]

Coffee/tea  
House  
w/ light pastries  
& sandwiches  
↓

friendly  
neighborhood  
watering hole  
↓

Skateboarding  
& ~~lark~~  
ramps →

Bookstore  
with coffee  
shop

RESALE  
Clothing/  
Furniture  
STORE

BAKERY

More  
Theater &  
Retail shops along  
Euwarren  
↓

Bryant/Williams  
Family  
① Recreation  
Center for  
Children/Family

fashionable  
quality  
walking -  
shoe  
store

Boy's & Girls  
Club

↑  
restore  
Wimpy's  
burger joint

Health  
Food  
store

Photography  
Studio  
↳ Studio rooms  
for creative  
use. Photography,  
Videography, Fashion  
designs, etc.

Local <sup>↑Prove</sup>  
Pet Supply  
Store / boarding /  
grooming  
↓

↑  
Hardware  
store

Board game  
cafe / bar

A place for  
teens to have  
more fun at

Frozen  
yogurt

↑  
neighborhood  
<sup>divided</sup>  
family  
restaurant  
↘

Game  
Stop

Restaurants (clean/safe)  
w/ small retail shops  
and of course, cleaners  
↙ ↘

Neighborhood  
Book Club  
Meetings

Rec center /  
Hw / after school  
Center

Pop Up  
Shops

ARTISTS  
workshop  
for local  
classes  
(\*) + writing w/  
artist

Independent  
Bookstore

More Restaurants,  
Kids/parks / basket-  
ball court, and more  
basic needs

fruit & vegetable  
Market

Brewing

↗  
Shoe Repair  
Tailor /  
Alterations  
for clothing

COMMERCIAL  
KITCHEN  
FOR SHARED  
USE

Juice  
BAR  
+  
ORGANIC  
Grocery  
Store

ARTIST  
and/or MUSICIAN  
MAKER SPACE

↗  
Farm and  
Garden

Satellite  
Oakland University  
Classes ↑ note

BOWLING  
ALLEY

Fine dining  
w/ patio  
↓

24 Hove  
RESTAURANT!

Planet  
Fitness

interest in the Space  
Rebelle Boutique  
Danelle ↑ note

P17  
Street scape  
improvements  
and traffic calmer  
at Cadieux + Warden.  
P12  
Branding - i-know entering  
Compton Village  
East Engish Vill.  
Diver road  
signage

new fine  
dining  
restaurant  
↓

Bulk food/  
store -  
Spices etc....  
↑ note

Plot a UL  
Park around  
see are  
UL kids  
Pavilion  
or  
footballs

ARTIST  
AND/OR MUSICIAN  
MAKER SPACE

Pizzeria  
↓

# Want to renovate your storefront?

Motor City Re-Store can help



**You could win up to \$25k in matching facade grants.**  
*Attend an information session to learn more!*

- Sept. 12, 6p-8p** @ Royalty Dance Studio, 16424 E Warren Ave.
- Sept. 13, 11a-1p** @ Livernois Popup Storefront, 19410 Livernois Ave.
- Sept. 14, 6p-8p** @ Mariscos el Salpicon, 8600 Vernor Hwy.
- Sept. 18, 9a-11a** @ TechTown, 440 Burroughs St.
- Sept. 19, 6p-8p** @ Family Bakery, 17032 W Warren Ave.
- Sept. 20, 6p-7p** @ Grand River WorkPlace, 19120 Grand River Ave.
- Sept. 20 (West Side application workshop), 7p-8p** @ Grand River WorkPlace, 19120 Grand River Ave.
- Sept. 21, 6p-8p** @ Matrix Center, 13560 E McNichols Rd.
- Sept. 28 ( East Side application workshop), 3p-4p** @ Thinkers Co-Working Space, 14346 Jefferson Ave.



[www.motorcityrestore.com](http://www.motorcityrestore.com)

(844) 749-8359





SEP 12 Motor City Re-Store Info Session: East Warren

Public · Hosted by Motor City Re-Store

✓ Interested ▾



🕒 Tuesday, September 12 at 6 PM - 8 PM  
about 2 months ago

📍 Royalty Dance Studio, 16424 East Warren Avenue Detroit, MI 48224

✉ Invited by James Edward Feagin IV

About

Discussion

5 Went · 1 Interested

[See All](#)



James, Maureen and 3 other friends went

Details

Are you a Detroit-based small business owner who needs help renovating your storefront? Motor City Re-Store can help! We give Detroit's neighborhood businesses a boost in curb appeal through matching grants that improve their storefronts, making our commercial corridors more walkable, more attractive, and better for business.

Please join us for an information session to learn more about who is eligible for Motor City Re-Store, and how to apply. Applications for Round 2 are open until October 1, 2017. You can learn more about the program at [www.motorcityre-store.com](http://www.motorcityre-store.com)

## APPENDIX I - WEBSITE SAMPLE SCREEN PRINTS



HOME • BUSINESS SUPPORT • CONTACT • CURRENT BUSINESSES • HOLIDAY POP UP SHOP! • NEIGHBORHOODS •  
WHY E WARREN? • PRIME PROPERTIES

HOME

IMPORTANT DECEMBER DATES!

DECEMBER 4TH: BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY MEETING

Facebook Invite for more details: <https://www.facebook.com/events/139927803492265/>



DECEMBER 5TH: MASTERS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC PRESENTATION

THE RESTORIN' E. WARREN FRAMEWORK.



## BUSINESS SUPPORT

There are a number of resources to help start a new business or support an existing business in the city:

For a comprehensive list of these resources go to <http://detroitbizgrid.com/>



Advertisements

## CURRENT BUSINESSES



Currently we have been able to update businesses between Bedford and Guilford. If you know of a business you would like added to the map please email: [restonineastwarren@gmail.com](mailto:restonineastwarren@gmail.com)

Advertisements

## NEIGHBORHOODS

The East Warren Corridor we are focused on cuts across 3 neighborhoods each neighborhood has its own unique charm! All information provided is from the respective websites linked below.

### MORNINGSIDE

<http://our-morningside.org/>

Morningside is a neighborhood on the east side of Detroit, Michigan. The area is bounded by Harper Avenue and Interstate 94 on the north, Meek Avenue to the south, East Outer Drive and Whittier on the east and Alter Road and East Outer Drive to the west. The local association that shares the name Morningside with the community is a collaboration of residents working together to take care of this area.

### EAST ENGLISH VILLAGE

<http://www.eastenglishvillage.org/>

#### COMMUNITY

With many amenities – quick access to downtown Detroit and neighboring cities, good shopping choices, public/private schools and an active, engaged community – the neighborhood is an excellent choice for families and individual homeowners. The neighborhood association hosts activities including contests, home tours, garden club, annual garage sale and a holiday party. Established residents and new neighbors meet monthly to discuss issues, successes and general neighborhood information. The mutual support of neighbors and feeling of community is the heart of our neighborhood.

#### DIVERSITY

East English Village prides itself on the diversity of our community. We are one of the most racially mixed neighborhoods in the City of Detroit. Civil servants, blue collar workers, retirees and professionals from different ethnic groups, religions and sexual orientations have all found a welcome place here.

#### UNIQUE ARCHITECTURE

First developed in 1919, most of the distinctive brick homes of East English Village were built in the early 1930s through 1950. The solid architecture and high quality materials used in the homes continues to attract residents who value the charm and character of older homes.

### CORNERSTONE VILLAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/cornerstonevillagedetroit/>

We were formally established as Organized Neighbors East in 1977 for the purpose of maintaining and improving the neighborhood. A few years ago we changed our name to Cornerstone Village to reflect that we are the easternmost corner of Detroit's east side. We have had great success in the past, protecting our park and other key areas from undesirable development. One project the Board recently worked on was petitioning the City to have our dangerous homes demolished.

Advertisements

## WHY E WARREN?

GOAL: 100% RETAIL OCCUPANCY BY 2022!



East Warren was a thriving business district for many years. In the 1930s there were 21 businesses between Bedford and Guilford.



Currently, east Warren has 36.5% retail occupancy. But majority of the buildings are standing and waiting for businesses to occupy them!

CONSUMER EXPENDITURE FOR E WARREN CORRIDOR

POPULATION BREAKDOWN (ALONG CORRIDOR)

MORNINGSIDE	9,410
EAST ENGLISH VILLAGE	8,702
CORNERSTONE	9,300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27,412 POPULATION</b>

MONEY SPENT BY POPULATION

APPAREL	\$ 47,676,480
FOOD (OUTSIDE OF THE HOME)	\$ 74,714,224
ALCOHOL	\$ 11,286,970
ENTERTAINMENT	\$ 85,768,260
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 220,455,934 IN SPENDING</b>

The three neighborhoods that border the E Warren Corridor spend over 200 Million Dollars on retail goods and entertainment but virtually none of that is captured locally currently. The more we can assist businesses to locate on E Warren the more jobs and money can be captured locally. (This corridor has the highest consumer expenditure of any on the Eastside of Detroit!)

## PRIME PROPERTIES



**1627 E Warren**  
Lot Price: \$55,000  
Previous uses: auto parts  
Space: 1700 SF  
Lot Size: 26,000  
Appeal: One of the best located spots in Warren City.

<http://www.rex.com/homes-for-sale/48224/MI/Detroit/16927-E-WARREN/Sys-REALCOM/PMI-217038416.html>



**1570 E Warren**  
Lot Price: \$125,000  
Space: 8000 SF  
Lot Size: 44,500  
Appeal: Corner building with wide frontage

[https://www.c21affiliated.com/Property/MI/48224/Detroit/15701\\_E\\_WARREN\\_Avenue](https://www.c21affiliated.com/Property/MI/48224/Detroit/15701_E_WARREN_Avenue)



**16330 E Warren**  
Price: \$175,500  
Available space: 5782 SF  
Lot size: 179x310  
Listing Agent: Mid-America Realty

Additional Info: 16330 East Warren Avenue (Former Charter One Bank) - EMAIL

Contact Info: LINDSEY SHAW/Phone #: 248.855.6800/

Email: lshaw@midamericagrp.com



**18023 E Warren**  
Lot Price: 150k  
Owner: Blank Properties LLC  
Previous uses: Multi Use structure  
Space: 10,000 SF  
Appeal: Large Mixed Use space

Contact Info: Ivory- 313-522-2621



**4923 Cadmus**  
Lot Price: \$800,000  
Owner: Jerry Karber  
Previous uses: Mixed Usage  
Space: 22,000 SF  
Appeal: Office spanning second floor to street

## APPENDIX J - COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR ACTIVATION GUIDE “CORRIDOR RESTORE”



The Restorin' E. Warren team wanted to make sure the momentum gained over the past eight months not only helps this commercial strip come back to life, but provides a model for corridors around the city come back to life through grassroots efforts. Key factors to this approach are community engagement, empowerment, and ownership over the process and how to get reacquainted with the commercial corridor. loby.org, a nonprofit crowdfunding platform that helps the community gain the funding and resources needed to implement projects successfully has agreed to partner on this guide to make sure it can be available in an open source manner across the country. Highlights of the guide appear below.

1. **BE PRESENT!!** The more you observe and meet people the more you build trust.
2. **Meet Businesses Owners.** Understand what they are dealing with and who seems to want to be community focused. No one knows the corridor better than the business owners, and they can give you a lay of the land.
3. **Build the List.** Get contact information for any and everyone that wants to be involved in revitalizing the commercial corridor
4. **Understand Property Ownership.** Survey your neighborhood; What is open? What is vacant? Reference online databases to find ownership info and who is behind on taxes. Understanding what buildings are for lease and sale and for how much is invaluable. Once you identify the property owner, contact them and let them know there are people opening businesses along the corridor and you would love to assist in helping to get the building open.
5. **Activate.** Is there a treasured or exciting building on your corridor everyone would love to tour? Is there a dangerous intersection or area that doesn't feel walkable? Reimagine it, and host a temporary activation there. Have a fun event that gets people out utilizing the corridor.
6. **Market the Corridor.** Work with the community to come up with a slogan that fits the Corridor. Start a social media page, website, and build a buzz through the neighborhood communication channels (listservs, Facebook, Nextdoor, etc.).

7. **Engage.** Once you have built up excitement along the corridor by hosting an activation and starting a social media page, host a meeting with those interested in seeing things happen on the business strip, invite any entities around the city looking to make business happen so that they can share resources with your community.
8. **Send bad actors/prospectors a letter.** Understanding owner's intentions and not assuming the worst is the best case scenario. Maybe they will contact you and let you know they are looking to sell, better yet they may fix up their building and get it back into productive use. You could even have a community letter writing or phone call campaign to help expedite progress.
9. **Code Enforcement.** If you can't get a hold of the owner or you don't see any action, report the location to the city, and encourage them to send someone out to investigate the report, and possibly cite the owner for their property not being up to code.
10. **Media Attention.** No business owner wants to be publicly scrutinized for their lack of upkeep to their property. Contacting the press about the state of their building can be a tremendously powerful tool but should only be used for the most extreme or non-responsive offenders.
11. **Nuisance Abatement.** As a community, talk to your local non-profit law center, see what it would take to file suit against them to try to help them comply. (This should be your last resort, and can be the most costly.)



**APPENDIX K - BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY MEETING FLYER**

# FIRST MEETING!

RESTORING  
E WARREN

PLEASE JOIN US  
FOR THE FIRST  
MEETING OF THE  
E WARREN  
BUSINESS AND  
COMMUNITY  
ASSOCIATION

When: 11/6 6pm  
Where: Jefferson  
Branch Library  
12350 E Warren  
Detroit, MI 48224

For more info email: [restorineastwarren@gmail.com](mailto:restorineastwarren@gmail.com) or  
call 313-575-7014







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